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A

LOOKING-GLASS,

&c. &c. &c.

[PRICE 3*s*.]

A

LOOKING-GLASS

FOR A

RIGHT HONOURABLE MENDICANT;

OR, THE

REAL CHARACTER

OF A

CERTAIN GREAT ORATOR;

WITH IMPORTANT

POLITICAL OBSERVATIONS:

IN PARTICULAR THE

MARROW OF THE SLAVE QUESTION,

AND OF THAT RESPECTING THE

Laws of Debtor and Creditor,

&c. &c.

BY

AN OLD MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

—— NOSCE TEIPSUM.

REX, LEX, GREX.

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M.DCC.XCIV.

A

LOOKING-GLASS,

&c. &c.

I Propoſe to treat of the character of a man who, with a preſumptuous raſhneſs, has attempted to hoiſt the ſignal of diſcontent in this happy and nearly united country: of whom I conceive all parties have formed an erroneous eſtimate; and whom, on account of his pretenſions, it behoves his countrymen accurately to know.

Connected as he is, and has been from his youth, with public affairs, an inveſtigation of his conduct naturally leads the enquirer into the field of politics; in which, a detection of this man's egregious errors, if executed with candour and ability, cannot fail of being highly inſtructive and beneficial to the country.

I have undertaken (raſhly perhaps) to engage with a ſubject, under which the preſs has groaned, and which many may ſuppoſe to be entirely exhauſted; from a due reſpect to theſe in particular, I engage, that in whatever ſpecies of merit my work may be deficient, it ſhall not be without that conciliating one of brevity. From the quantity which has already been ſaid, I ſhall have the leſs occaſion to be diffuſe, or to purſue hiſtorical detail. I ſhall aim only at eſſentials. My way of thinking will, by moſt people, be held peculiar; that will, in ſome de-

gree, give me a title to the claim of novelty; I flatter myſelf with the hopes of being alſo able to eſtabliſh the more material and more honourable ones, of truth and reaſon.

From the various paſſions of intereſt, prejudice, and caprice, which agitate and influence human nature; the world ſeldom hears a true character of men in high and conſpicuous ſituations, until long after they have quitted it, and are incapable of rendering it further good or harm; it is equally difficult for ſuch men to obtain true characters of themſelves, granting they poſſeſs ſufficient ſtrength of mind to accept, with gratitude, ſo invaluable a preſent.

Theſe preliminaries, I truſt, will be accepted by the world as an apology, and by the Right Hon. Gentleman himſelf, for the delineation I am about to make of the features of his mind; which I am bold to ſay, a long and ſtrict examination of his innermoſt character, has enabled me to execute with a nicety and exactneſs, to which they ought not to pretend who have neither taken the ſame pains, nor enjoyed the ſame opportunities of obſervation.

If my portrait ſhould differ exceedingly from that which men in general, both friends and enemies, have choſen to form for themſelves of this eminent perſon; I humbly intreat them to conſider, how uſual it is for things to be taken for granted, and received almoſt univerſally as truths, merely from a plauſibility in their appearance; all I deſire of them is, to judge impartially between the juſt value of their old prepoſſeſſions, and that of ſuch new reaſons as may be produced againſt them. With reſpect to the gentleman himſelf, I ought to apprehend nothing like reſentment from him, for any thing but an offence againſt truth; he has made but a poor progreſs in that excellent philoſophy, of which he ſo conſtantly boaſts, if he is, at this time of day, unable to abſtract the thinking faculty from that portion of matter which compoſes himſelf; and of forming as fair and impartial a judgment of its excel-

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lencies and defects, as he would have the power to do of that which belonged to his neighbour. If he really has made any advance in the paths of true philoſophy, he will thank me for the aſſiſtance I am about to afford him towards his farther progreſs.

The Right Hon. C. J. *** inherits from nature moſt of the admired qualities of mind, in a degree vaſtly ſuperior to ordinary mortals. To a capacity for the quick attainment of knowledge of any kind, to which he chuſes to lend his attention, he joins a memory whence nothing eſcapes; and which is ever ready at command to afford him ideas of a certain ſtandard, and furniſh him with reaſons of a certain depth, ready arranged in graceful and becoming order. He enjoys, in a moſt ample meaſure, all the advantages attendant upon quickneſs of parts; but with the uſual alloy, which, on cloſe inſpection, reduces theſe flaming meteors to the level of common lights. His warm and ſanguineous temperament of body, the eaſe and rapidity with which he frames and examines his ideas, occaſion in him ſo ſtrong a confidence and attachment to firſt impreſſions, with ſuch an overweening ſenſe of his own powers, as for ever to exclude the poſſible exiſtence of that moſt exalted and valuable property of mind—a ſound judgment. Indeed firſt-rate quickneſs of parts, joined with a proportionate depth and compaſs of underſtanding, ſeldom appear united in one man, deſtined at once to aſtoniſh and govern his fellow-creatures.

His learning, like his mind, is rather various and extenſive than ſolid; but his knowledge of the routine of public buſineſs, from early predilection and habitual attention, is perhaps equal to that of any of his competitors. As an orator, which is his chief character, he is doubtleſs capable of rendering diſtinguiſhed ſervices to any party, although his eloquence is not of that kind which affects or impreſſes us either with delight or awe. The Graces wait not on his bodily

 action,

action, nor does perſuaſion hang upon his tongue; on the contrary, his voice (when at beſt) was diſſonant and unpleaſing, and his elocution unintelligibly and diſagreeably rapid. His higheſt merit is to be always ready to ſpeak long, and plauſibly, and with an undaunted confidence, upon any ſubject which intereſts the public attention; and ſuch a qualification will ever confer weight and conſequence in a free country. He poſſeſſes that ſteady confidence in his own ſenſe of things, ſo eſſential to men of profound judgment and exalted genius; but which minds leſs profound, and agitated by warm imaginations, poſſeſs in common with them; in whom it is the ſource of perpetual raſhneſs, of conſtant blunder, and conſtant apology. Belonging to this latter claſs, he may fairly be ſuppoſed equally unfit to preſide at the head of the national affairs, as he has ever proved himſelf a uſeleſs and unprofitable leader of Oppoſition. An examination of his heart, or rather of his moral conduct, taken from his childhood, and continued to this hour, affords us a glaring picture of vanity, ſelf-gratification, and intereſt; and whoever takes a cloſe and critical ſurvey of his actions, will find theſe ſolely to have been their main ſpring and prime incentives. His repeated political tergiverſations, his numerous though baffled attempts at public deception, his ſuſpicious conduct, or rather barefaced malverſation in private life, leave him no poſſible claims to integrity of character: not but he has paſſed in the world for a good-natured, ſincere, and even generous man. Men in general make no diſtinction between good-nature and good-temper, any more than between ſterling ability and its counterfeit, until they are ſet right by ſad perſonal experience. The natural warmth of Mr. ***'s conſtitution has deceived himſelf, and the pleaſantneſs of his manner has wrought the ſame effect upon a great part of the circle by which he has been ſurrounded. An obſtinate adherence to their own humours and prejudices, is boaſted of as ſuperla-

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tive honeſty by ſome people, and perhaps they really believe as they profeſs. After all, the chief difference between good and bad is frequently nothing more than the ability in the former, from education and habit, to repreſs ſelfiſh and evil deſires. Socrates acknowledged, that his inclinations were naturally vicious, and that he had ſubdued them by the aid of reaſon and philoſophy. We wiſh to recommend to the imitation of C. *** ſo excellent an example.

But not to deal in naked and unwarranted aſſertion, as they * have done who have given ſo different a character of this partizan, let us reſort to his real actions, and profeſſed opinions, as the chief ground on which we mean to

* Dr. P——, in his Preface to Bellendenus (in which we find an ample portion of that ſpirit, elegance, perſpicuity, and conceit, which characteriſe the Doctor's writings) has cruelly expoſed, and hung up to everlaſting ridicule, the characters of his heroes. What a ſurfeit of great men in this ſmall inſulated ſpot!—It is wonderful he ſhould have omitted Dr. Graham and Mr. Dibdin, ſince their greatneſs might indiſputably have been proved from their actions, and their ſucceſsful attempts to ſerve their country in their reſpective profeſſions; an advantage which thoſe great men, whom the Doctor choſe to exhibit, do not ſeem to have poſſeſſed. The Doctor, in all the pomp of pedantry, overwhelming his illiterate reader with the number and weight of his learned quotations, has ranſacked every eminent character of antiquity, for the moſt exalted and valuable qualifications, with which to adorn the characters of his favourites. Juſt as the prudent manager of a ſtrolling company bedizens his theatrical heroes with ſecond-hand finery, collected from different ſhops. What, although the habiliments do not altogether fit, or that ſome of them may ſet rather aukwardly upon the parties ſo dreſſed out, it matters not—they are ſufficiently fine, and well ſatisfied with themſelves; and the vulgar do not diſcover the cheat. Since the French Revolution, we underſtand one of the great characters is to be re-touched by the artiſt. How eaſily the morality of the prieſt accommodates itſelf to that of the patron! How eaſily are the moſt ſuſpicious and exceptionable parts of a great man's conduct even refined into virtues! Methinks I hear the reverend French pimp, ſaying to the Widow Scarron, *Comply with the king, even as Sarah complied with Abraham.* But one cannot help being ſcandalized at the groſs and indecent freedom with which a diſappointed pedagogue (who is much better verſed in the *buſineſs of quotation* than the ſcience of politics) affects to treat ſome of the firſt characters in the kingdom. *Ne ſutor.*

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reſt our judgment. Once for all, let me not be miſunderſtood—I ſeek not unjuſtly to depreciate the character of this man, but to ſerve my country; which, to gratify his own inveterate prejudices, and his private intereſts, he is labouring to deceive. I muſt inſiſt, from the evidence hitherto before us, his integrity is not to be depended upon; and although his ſhining endowments, and great knowledge of buſineſs, well qualify him to ſerve his country, in ſecondary ſituations, yet his egregious want of judgment, his raſhneſs and political fanaticiſm, utterly incapacitate him for taking the lead in public affairs.

There is ſomething to be ſure prepoſſeſſing and ſeducive of our applauſe, in the facility, readineſs, and fluency, with which a man makes long, acute, and ſenſible harangues, upon every poſſible topic that comes forward for public diſcuſſion; ſomething which awes us in the eſtabliſhed fame of his ability, and in the rank he holds in the political drama. But are all our advocates at the bar men of ſublime genius and tranſcendent abilities, becauſe they are able to make long and clever ſpeeches? And why is not his friend Erſkine as able to ſuſtain the weight of empires as Mr. ***. Our hiſtory will furniſh us with a copious liſt of men, now ſcarce recollected, although celebrated in their day for a ſplendid oratory, which added nothing to the general ſtock of knowledge, or of benefit to their country. We alſo read of men of the deepeſt judgment, and of the moſt conſummate powers of action, who were unable to expreſs their ſentiments, copiouſly or elegantly, either by word or writing. The powers of amplification, and the graces of beauty, are not always the harbingers of ſolid ſtrength or of real utility. A certain great critic, whoſe name I do not immediately recollect, has ſaid of Tacitus, that his language, however pithy, from its extreme conciſeneſs and want of copiouſneſs, has the appearance of naked or even unfiniſhed memorandums. Doubtleſs,

leſs, this was a defect of Nature in that moſt acute and profound hiſtorian; ſhe had not loaded his mind with a profuſion of images, though ſhe had endowed it with the power of calling up and ſelecting the moſt appropriate and moſt uſeful. If ſhe had reſtrained his imagination within narrow limits, ſhe made him ample amends, by the precious gift of an intuitive force of mind; which, caſting aſide all ſupernumerary conſiderations, pierces to the very marrow of things, and at once forms a correct and ſolid judgment. The ability to diſtinguiſh veriſimilitude from truth herſelf, appears to be the true criterion of mental ſuperiority; and to ſeek and examine the reverſe of every propoſition, is the true philoſophy of knowledge.

We are not, then, to determine the ſtrength of a man's mind by the multitude of his words, the quickneſs of his wit, or the graces of his action; nor even by the opinion of the generality of mankind, to whoſe capacities the ſhadow of truth is generally better adapted than the ſubſtance. A mind but of moderate depth, may contain a large and ſplendid collection, and beautiful arrangement, of ideas, and yet chiefly veriſimilitudinary, ſophiſticated, and uſeleſs. It is wonderful with what accuracy ſome minds will examine moſt, or perhaps all the detached members of a propoſition, and yet form a very erroneous judgment of the whole; but it is ſtill more wonderful, that of two paths, one of which only leads to truth, many men ſhall attach themſelves to the oppoſite, with the fondeſt and moſt bigotted perſeverance.

To trouble our readers with arguments on the ſubject of Charles ***'s morality, or to enter into a minute ſcrutiny of his private life, would be an invidious and unpleaſant taſk. This queſtion has already been decided, *nem. con.* and the major part of thoſe who patronize Mr. ***, make uſe of the apology, that it is neceſſary to have ſomebody to watch over the

the conduct of miniſters; and that they adopt him, for no better reaſon than that he has preſented himſelf. For a commentary on that ſagacious maxim, "that a man's private conduct has nothing to do with his public character," I refer my readers to the hiſtory of the *ſoy diſant* patriots of all countries, beginning with any one they pleaſe in the Roman or Grecian ſtory; and concluding with John Wilkes of notorious memory. It diſgraces us, as a free people, to acknowledge that we owe the undoubted public benefit, of the ſuppreſſion of general warrants, to a character totally deſtitute of principle or integrity.

Let us try whether we can diſcover this "portentous "ability," this immenſe and original genius, which certain writers, and Mr. *** himſelf tells us in the news-papers of his party, is equal to the grandeſt occaſions, and the moſt perilous times, in the wiſe and fortunate conduct of his political and private life. I will allow the full force of that excellent maxim in the preacher, *the race is not to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong, but time and chance happeneth to them all.* But, ſurely, it is no unfair calculation, that the average of twenty laborious years, ought to produce ſome ſolid proofs of a man's ſkill, either in the manifeſtation of his ſucceſs, or the reaſonableneſs of his apologies.

As a gambler, we are to view Mr. *** in the light of a profeſſional man; not one who has played merely for amuſement, or from the rage of play; but as a trained veteran, who, after having ſerved a regular apprenticeſhip, has dedicated his days and nights to the ſcience; who has held a ſhare in the tables, and enjoyed the beſt opportunities. And yet we find he has been perpetually outwitted at this trade, from his commencement to *the ſtoppage* of the campaign of 1792.—We are to attribute all this, I ſuppoſe, to that plaguy honeſty of his, which he and others tell us has been ſo often the occaſion of his want of ſucceſs. In this caſe there

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is no doubt, but he could even bring r—— vouchers for his character. It was ever beneath his dignity, and againſt his ſenſe of honour, to pluck pigeons.

For his trade of politician, the diſcerning world does not want me to point it out to them, that Mr. *** ſet up with preciſely the ſame view as other traders—that of advancing his own fortune and conſequence. Some folks will perhaps be diſpoſed to ſing with the poet—

——— Rogues always are our miniſters of ſtate.

And this gentleman's immaculate honeſty muſt be again brought upon the carpet, as an apology for his want of ſucceſs. But, if we are to lay aſide the common rules of judging, by what ſpecies of evidence are we to be determined in our verdict? To a common obſerver, his repeated manœuvres, on this ſide and that, demonſtrate nothing but the uſual political frauds, and thoſe neither ſoftened with much refinement, nor executed in the moſt maſterly way. As the retainer of a Tory cabinet, he at firſt appeared to be in the line of making the beſt poſſible market of his talents; when that opiniated preſumption, that error in ſelf-eſtimation (which has ſo often ſince blaſted his blooming hopes) and not the ſmalleſt diſapprobation of the general tenor of the meaſures then purſuing, if we are to credit his own reiterated declarations, procured him a ſudden diſcharge. It would be too trivial, and too common an event in the life of a politician, to remark with much parade, that as ſoon as out of place he begins to unſay all that he had before been ſaying while he was in. All that is well underſtood to be for the good of the country.

Behold now the immaculate C. ***, in the teeth of all his former principles and profeſſions, bawling himſelf hoarſe, in defence of the oppreſſed Americans, vouching for the purity of their intentions; and, by a conſtant and indiſcirminate oppoſition to the meaſures of government, encouraging the

enemies, and adding to the calamities of his country! Was his bare-faced coalition with the man, whom he had threatened with the axe, as the grand deſtroyer of his country, ſo lately, that his words yet tingled in the ears of the people, a proof either of the honeſty of his heart, or of the maturity of his judgment? Or did he act over again a ſcene of his childhood, ſhut his own eyes, and think all the world too were blind.

See him afterwards at the head of the Exchequer, nearly at the ſummit of his ambition, whence he is ſoon to fall by his own miraculous imprudence. Inflated and blinded by his own imaginary conſequence, he little dreamed he was only in a ſtate of probation *, or merely a tool, ſubſervient to the intereſt and convenience of thoſe who doubted the ſteadineſs of his character. How are we to reconcile it, to any tolerable ſhare of political ſagacity in Mr. ***, that he attempted carrying ſuch a meaſure as his famous India Bill, which he ought to have foreſeen the crown *would not*, nay *could not* ſuffer? A meaſure too, equally hoſtile to the rights and intereſts of the collective body of the people, and which had a direct tendency to perpetuate the Eaſt India monopoly. Where was the diſcernment or diſcretion of that man, or his knowledge of the conſtitution of England, who, although ambitious of place and preferment, could offer ſuch a needleſs affront to royalty, as to aſſert in the Houſe of Commons, that it was not neceſſary for a miniſter to poſſeſs the favour and confidence of the ſovereign? A very practical confutation of the maxim ſoon followed; and the period of this irrefragable politician's miniſtry was determined upon, long before he even ſuſpected his intereſt was in the wane.

It were needleſs to enter into any political diſcuſſion on the

* One or two gentlemen can, whenever they pleaſe, bear teſtimony, that the late Lord North declared it as his opinion, after the coalition, that Mr. *** was not at all calculated for the poſt of miniſter; which opinion was reported to the ****.

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ſubject of the Regency. It is ſo notorious, that I need not fear being called upon for proofs, if I ſimply aſſert, that Mr. *** and his party were determined, in that awful contingence, to ſeize upon the helm of ſtate, and the loaves and fiſhes, at whatever riſk to the country, had they not been fairly beaten, as well as out-voted, by a ſet of men, their ſuperiors at leaſt in political intrigue, if not in political honeſty.

C. *** is ſo little accuſtomed to ſucceſs in his attempts, that we will compaſſionately forgive his repeated vaunts of the fortunate oppoſition to the buſineſs of the Ruſſian armament. He was undoubtedly right—though we will venture to ſay, that he is to this hour totally in the dark, as to the reaſons which obliged the miniſter to adopt that meaſure.

Fruſtrated in all his political ſchemes, duped in all his gambling ones, no money to bank with at the Pharo-table, even the Newmarket * debts left unpaid, what was now to be attemped?

Who would be *** outwitted and undone.

Now for a great and magnificent ſtroke of politics, worthy a Richlieu or a Cromwell! He leaves all his old friends, and puts himſelf at the head of the republican party. With the ſame ill-fated conceit and precipitation, which has rendered the account of the tranſactions of his life, a mere bead-roll of errors and follies, he fondly flattered himſelf, that the mighty name of *** would give conſequence to that little, contemptible and planet-ſtruck party. He miſtook the fanatic madneſs of a few Diſſenting teachers, and their idiotic and knaviſh followers, for the ſymptoms of a real enthuſiaſm in the body of the people; and, notwithſtanding almoſt inſtant conviction of his error, to demonſtrate to us that he has not degenerated, he ſtill perſiſts.

* Until the unfortunate period here alluded to, this gentleman's Newmarket debts were always moſt honourably and punctually diſcharged.

In what part of the foregoing ſummary of the chief actions of Mr. ***'s political life, are we to look for that conſummate ability, which himſelf, and ſo many of his countrymen, ſuppoſe him to poſſeſs? But failing there we ſhall be referred, doubtleſs, to his doctrines and profeſſed opinions—to his ſpeeches. In theſe laſt, indeed, it is more probable we ſhould find it; and we ought, as a certain ſhrewd writer obſerves, "He gets his living by talking." This inveſtigation muſt be ſomewhat extenſive, but we profeſs it ſhall be conducted upon principles totally independent of all party.

The political principles of this gentleman, as may be gathered from the general tenor of his public and private declarations (to coin a new phraſe) are thoſe of high whiggiſm; in other words, of ſpeculative oligarchy. And to theſe linſey-woolſey principles, he has ever adhered, with all the narrow prejudice, and bigotted obſtinacy, of a Preſbyterian parſon. Old Fletcher, of Saltoun, uſed to ſay, that he found much more patriotiſm, among the Tories of his time, than among the Whigs; and I think the Tories may very juſtly return the compliment to the Republicans of the preſent. However raſh, ill-judged, and ill-timed their efforts are, they are undoubtedly ſincere in their deſires to reform the abuſes of government. Happy for themſelves and for the country, if they poſſeſſed philoſophy enough to confine their wiſhes within ſuch juſt and moderate bounds.

The Whig ſyſtem, of Rye-houſe extraction, was hatched and brought to maturity during the troubleſome reign of Charles the Second. It is a dangerous and diſhoneſt ariſtocratical combination, not diſſimilar to that of the Barons of old, ever jealous of, and inimical to the juſt power of the crown; and naturally in oppoſition to the intereſts and privileges of the people. Not that we are to ſuppoſe there are any men, or any bodies of men, in this country, unimpreſſed with the general ideas of liberty; but unfortunately for the human race,

race, there have ever been too many of all parties; who have ſuppoſed, that nothing but the accidental poſſeſſion of property could intitle a man to freedom.

In the principles of whiggiſm, we diſcover no predilection for the primitive and patriarchal office of a king; or for hereditary right, the foundation and ſacred prop of monarchy; the monarch ſeems to be in no higher degree of eſtimation, with them, than as a ſtate idol, poſſeſſed of no inherent power; the mere creature of the ariſtocracy, and the executor of their commands. This confederacy, with liberty for ever in their mouths, have always acted as arbitrarily, when in power, as the temper of the times would poſſibly admit; and as the poſſeſſion of power over both king and people, and the diſpoſal of the good things of the ſtate amongſt themſelves and their creatures, excluſively, was their original and invariable object, and ſuch ends were unattainable by any other means, than an extenſive and corrupt influence; it ever has been, and muſt be vain for the country to expect from them a redreſs of grievances. To the Whig faction we owe it, that the fortunate conjunction of 1688 was not ſo advantageous to the kingdom, as a more honeſt and patriotic diſpoſition of affairs would have rendered it. To the ſame origin is to be attributed our immenſe national debt, contracted to indulge foreign prejudices, and to further foreign intereſt, at the expence of ſuch a vaſt portion of the blood, treaſure, and induſtry of this country. To their avarice and luſt of power, to their unequal and monopolizing principles of government; in fine, we may with the ſtricteſt juſtice lay the reproach, that ſo many glaring defects, and even alarming grievances, exiſt in our civil ſyſtem, unremedied to this day.

Towards the latter end of the reign of Anne, an attempt was made to diſſolve this ſelf-created monopoly of power; which pretended to a right of diſpoſal, and abſolute government, not only of the crown, but of the liberties and purſes

of

of their fellow citizens; but, unfortunately, the death of that princeſs, and the narrow prejudices, rather than a want of good intentions in her ſucceſſor, ſtood in the way of ſo deſirable a conſummation.

What, however, Lord Bolingbroke had begun, was deſtined to be completed half a century afterwards, by one of his pupils. The celebrated John, Earl of Bute, had the rare glory of inſtilling into the mind of his royal pupil, principles truly Britiſh, of uniting prince and people; and finally diſſolving the power of a graſping and inſatiable faction, which had been, during the four preceding reigns, monopolizing the honours, preying upon the wealth, and exhauſting the reſources of their country.

Never was the character of a man more unjuſtly aſperſed, than was that of the Earl of Bute *, as well by the ignorant, as the intereſted; and ſeldom has it fallen to the ſhare of any one to render more eſſential ſervices to his country. With one blow he annihilated both jacobitiſm and oligarchy—and left the foundations of our true political conſtitution, ſettled upon ſo firm a baſe, as will, in all probability, be able to reſiſt the moſt violent aſſaults of faction during a long futurity.

Unfortunately for his country, as well as for his own fame, Lord Bute's talents were better adapted to the ſpeculations of the cloſet than to the theatre of action; and his conſtitutional and unaccommodating pride, forbade him to truckle to the

* Lord Bute, when in the zenith of his power, told a friend of the author, in confidence—a man of the ſtricteſt veracity, and one whom very few would think themſelves capable of impoſing upon—that, as ſoon as the heavy preſſure of public affairs would give him leiſure, he would privately ſelect ſix of the ableſt and the honeſteſt men in the three kingdoms, to whom he would allow three years, to furniſh him with memorials upon the different grievances which exiſted in our religious, civil, and political government; and that he would recommend them to the conſideration of parliament, with all the influence he had. David Hume was ſpoken of as one of the ſix.

humours

humours of a man, who in his hands, would have been a moſt powerful inſtrument for the purpoſe of ameliorating, and perfecting that ſyſtem which it had been the grand object of his life to eſtabliſh.

The principles of Toryiſm, openly cheriſhed by the court, have been gaining ground during the preſent reign; and are at this hour more univerſally predominant in the kingdom than at any former period. Indeed, gradually refined as they have been by the new philoſophy, from the droſs of former Gothic prejudices, they appear to reconcile and create a perfect harmony between the ſtability of a legal hereditary monarchy, and the divine, indefeaſible hereditary rights of free citizens. With the moſt ardent zeal for liberty, and the moſt rational ideas of it, no nation in the world has ever been more univerſally, or more cordially attached, to the monarchial form of government than the Engliſh. We need not wonder then, that the old Tory principles are ſo generally acceptable among the people; ſtill leſs, that they are patronized by the monarch, forming as they do the ſtrongeſt bulwark of the throne.

The violent outcry which has been raiſed againſt theſe principles, ſeems never to have been ſupported by any juſt or ſolid grounds. The body of the monarchial party, oppoſed the exorbitant power of the crown in the reign of Charles the Firſt, until it became evident that the Puritans, under the ſpecious pretext of reforming abuſes, were about to level the monarchy, and eſtabliſh, in favour of themſelves, a power equally arbitrary and unjuſt upon its ruins. In the reign of the ſecond Charles, we behold a monarch, with no natural bias to virtue, indeed, but who might have been improved, by gentle management, into a bleſſing to his ſubjects; harreſſed and exaſperated into meaſures derogatory to his own character, and injurious to the intereſt of his country. All parties ſeem to have acted with an ill-judged parſimony towards this gracious and luxurious monarch, whoſe profuſion it would have been

politic

politic to have indulged in a conſiderable degree. Encouraged by the loyal careſſes of his ſubjects, Charles would have been a warm and munificent patron of the ſciences, of trade, and of all the uſeful arts of life; to which he was more led, by his natural inclinations, than to a luſt of tyrannical power. But what little there was of good in the heart of this monarch, was rendered uſeleſs by the intereſted violence of faction. The Whigs, although attached to the name and forms of monarchy, always find the power of it *unconſtitutional*, unleſs its exerciſe chances to be veſted in their own hands; between theſe, and the real republicans, the political conſtitution of England would, at that period, have degenerated into an arbitrary and fluctuating ariſtocracy, with ſomething like a king at its head, but for the principles of Toryiſm, which were firmly rooted in the hearts of the main body of the people.

At the Revolution, the Tory party, patriotically laying aſide their ancient prejudices, ſtood forth, with as great zeal, as the foremoſt of their competitors, in defence of the violated liberties of their country. It is true, they did not cabal in the family of their unfortunate and miſguided ſovereign, or endeavour by infamous, and impoſſible calumnies, to exalt one part of it at the expence of the juſt rights of the other; but in this criſis they were miſled, and entrapped by their own religious bigotry (which was little inferior to that of their diſcarded ſovereign) and by a much more juſtifiable cauſe, that of an anxious concern for their liberties. When they came to themſelves, they diſcovered, although it was too late, that they had been over-reached by the intrigues of their enemies, and over-awed by a foreign force, into meaſures which in all probability muſt involve the country in blood; or be attended with the ſacrifice of her deareſt intereſts at the ſhrine of foreign connections. With more good fortune to the nation, than the wiſdom and foreſight of thoſe who conducted

ducted the revolution ſeemed to promiſe, we ſteered clear of the firſt part of thoſe diſaſters which were apprehended; but of the latter, we feel the effect to this hour, in the burden of a national debt which can never be paid, and in the defective form of a government, which perhaps is not ſufficiently ſtrong to admit of the redreſs of grievances.

Never was a country leſs in need of foreign aid for its deliverance, than was England in the year 1688. Never did a deliverer deſerve leſs the panegyrics that intereſt and prejudice have ſo laviſhed upon his memory, either in reſpect to the merit of his pretended ſervices, or the excellence of his character, than the Prince of Orange. The narrow-minded and cruel bigot, who was with ſo much juſtice driven from the throne, ſo far from being in a capacity to change the ſuperſtition, or injure the liberties of his country, did not retain even the power to appoint a tax-gatherer: and the nation, united to a man in oppoſition to him, were as fully competent, in effect, as they were juſtly authorized by the ſpeculative right, to fill up the vacancy which had happened in their government. It need not be denied that the High-church party* have retained a ſecret bias towards jacobitiſm until the preſent reign; and much to their honour let it be recorded, that even under a ſort of proſcription from the reigning monarchs, they conſtantly ſacrificed their prejudices to the peace and happineſs of their country. The preſent King has too much ſagacity not to diſcover the ſuperior worth of an attachment which is founded upon hereditary

* In the latter part of the reign of Anne, the October Club diſpatched Col. *** to adviſe the Chevalier to abjure popery, and come boldly over to England, and ſurrender himſelf to the diſpoſal of the legiſlature and kingdom at large, with ſuch aſſurances of the ſupport of the whole ſtrength of the Tory party, as he needed not and did not doubt; but this propoſal, the fooliſh bigot, after three days conſideration, rejected. This appears to have been the laſt ſtep taken by the party in favour of the exiled family.——Private Family Memoirs, from 1638 to 1723.

right; nor ought it in reaſon diſpleaſe him, to be beloved for the portion of Stuart-blood which flows in his veins.

But to return to the character of Mr. ***: The irregularity of his conduct, his habitual and degrading dependance, and at length his total forfeiture of every veſtige of property, ſo lowered the tone of his Whiggiſm, that on the appearance of Thomas Paine and his works, he found himſelf not indiſpoſed to doctrines which evidently pointed to an univerſal level. It is natural enough for a man's principles to incline to his intereſt; and for one of large deſires, who is entirely deſtitute of property, and with a very poor proſpect of the legal acquirement of it, to wiſh ſucceſs to meaſures which may eventually bring about a freſh diviſion.

Mr. *** might ſuppoſe himſelf as likely as any man to ſtand a fair chance in the ſcramble. Already had he and his friend *Surface* anticipated the triumphs they were about to enjoy in the approaching National Convention. The brilliant but weak and ill-governed mind of this man has been perpetually toſſing him too and fro, and turning him from the paths of both duty and intereſt. According to his uſual cuſtom, of raſhly ſeizing the firſt impreſſions of his mind; he haſtily judged of the temper of the nation from the intemperate and noiſy follies of a few inſignificant individuals, diſperſed in different quarters, the organs of a party in every reſpect truly inſignificant. He really imagined that certain ſelf-created ſocieties, who poſſeſſed no other kind of conſequence than what they ſo liberally complimented each other with; who were not even ſufficiently known to become the laughing ſtock of their fellow ſubjects, would be able, with the aſſiſtance of a drunken Staymaker, and a renegado Parſon, to excite commotions among us, ſimilar to thoſe which exiſted in France. The wonderful induſtry with which the ſmall and infatuated body of Republicans exerted themſelves, their loud clamours, their bold declarations and aſſumptions in the Argus, effectually

tually dazzled the eyes and miſled the judgment of Mr. ***. So infatuated was he with his newly adopted connections, that he continued to give all poſſible encouragement to their principles and practices in thoſe news-papers immediately under his direction, without even ſuſpecting the diſguſt it occaſioned among his old friends; and, as if it was his ſingular ill fortune to be over-reached by all parties, he was actually abandoned by thoſe connections with which he had acted ſo long, and diſcarded by his patrons, before he perceived that any ſuch intentions exiſted among them.

By what arguments Mr. ***'s conduct is to be exculpated in the preſent caſe, I know not; how it is to be reconciled with that wiſdom he is ſaid to poſſeſs, or even with the plain and obvious rules of common ſenſe?

If we muſt again have recourſe to this man's marvellous honeſty (to which indeed he refers us in his pamphlet) in framing an apology for him, ſtill how are we to withhold our pity and contempt? Was the poor miſtaken good man, with all his wonderful intelligence, to be told that nine-tenths of the people of this country are not Republicans; that they deteſt the modern French politics with all the ardour of former Antigallican prejudice; and that, with their hands ſignificantly placed upon their pockets, they declare, *unâ voce*, they will have no confraternity whatever with French reformers. What poſſible expectation could he entertain of ſucceſs, in obtruding his diſguſting advice upon the minds of the indignant people; or of leading them ſo totally againſt their inclinations and their judgment, into his meaſures.

Never did the verieſt dabbler in politics, and the knowledge of the world, commit himſelf in ſo wretched a manner. If conſcience muſt be the plea, it was a caſe in which a man of a much maturer judgment than Mr. ***, might well have demurred, and ſought for counſel. Former ill-ſucceſs, the conſequence of raſhneſs and error, ought to have taught him

diffidence. A man, the moſt ambitious of all others of court preferment, has entered into meaſures which muſt for ever ſhut the door of ſalvation—that is, of the cabinet againſt him. —A man, unprovided with a guinea, with a miraculous folly, has taken ſteps which rendered his diſmiſſal abſolutely neceſſary to the honour of thoſe from whom he derived not only his conſequence, but even his very ſubſiſtence. And what was the price of all theſe ſacrifices? The honour of forming a junction with French rebels and murderers (who, he himſelf owns, are running the career of infamy and diſgrace) from pretended motives of intereſt; which *they* indignantly ſpurn at, to whom he tenders the mighty benefit; and that of heading a faction, who poſſeſs neither numbers, power, or influence; nor ought, but the contempt of their fellow citizens, and a juſt and well-founded ſuſpicion of himſelf.

But it would baffle even the fertile, eloquent, and energic genius of Burke, to find terms ſufficiently expreſſive of contempt and indignation, in which to deſcribe the next ſtep of this officious Maniac. It is enough to damn all the poor remains of his political character, at leaſt beyond all power or poſſibility of redemption, ſimply to recite, that he is the man who, with unbluſhing front, ſtood up among the commons of England, and adviſed the Sovereign to ſuch a groſs proſtitution of his own honour and dignity, and that of the nation, as to form a treaty and alliance with a band of aſſaſſins and regicides, who had by accident ſtolen poſſeſſion of power, and whoſe murderous hands were ſtill reeking with the blood of their king. The monſtrous burleſque and imprudence of ſuch a propoſition, was overſhadowed by the conſideration of its infamy. Every man, of common penetration, thought he could deſcry, in the character of one capable of making ſuch a barefaced propoſal, ſomething which would ſcruple no means, however diſhoneſt, that might be judged neceſſary to the attainment of his ends. The grovelling and debaſed

morals

morals of a gambler, were inſtantly recognized in the features of the meaſure. To what purpoſe this out-heroding Herod in folly, this work of ſupererrogation in diſgrace? I can impute it to nothing more than the reſtleſs ambition of a vain man to diſtinguiſh himſelf; to the puerile weakneſs of him, who *having dubbed himſelf* with the name of "Man of the People," vainly imagines it would derogate from his aſſumed character, to ſit ſilent and be adviſed.

Are not ſtates then bound by the principles of honour and morality as well as individuals? Or, may the collective body of the people very ſafely and commendably become raſcals by precedent?—We know, but too well, that any one may eaſily find precedents of this kind as well as Mr. ***. But what need of all this preſſing eagerneſs of degradation? this indecent haſte to join an ephemerous ſwarm of villainous inſects, that may be followed by ſuch a ſucceſſion as will leave no end or bounds to our diſgrace! The evil and ſhame of that day will be ſufficient, in which we are compelled to ſhake hands with robbery and murder, and acknowledge them of divine right; it would be madneſs in us, indeed, to anticipate our own infamy and ruin.

A very ſuperficial knowledge of the politics of the day, would have taught a man, that putting the idea of peace or war out of the queſtion, Mr. ***'s motion was as nugatory as it was diſhonourable and unpopular; for the ſtate of Europe required that the country ſhould be placed in a proper ſtate, either for defence or offence, and ſuch a ſituation could ſcarce fail to obtain for us all the advantages of Mr. ***'s plan, without any of its concomitant infamy.

This "laſt of infamies!" this groſſeſt of all follies! this ſuicide committed upon his own character! is to be looked upon by his countrymen as the laſt act of the political farce of C. ***! Henceforth he will ſhrink from our notice, into a mere private man; whom the compaſſion of his friends

rewarded

rewarded for *what he could not do*; and he will be remembered by the public no otherwiſe, than in their ſelf-gratulations, at having eſcaped the peril of his raſh projects.

We are now about to examine a ſcene in Mr. ***'s private affairs, in which he conducted himſelf with ſuch ability, addreſs, and prudence, as, had they been exerted at a more early period, would have obviated numberleſs inconveniences to which he has been expoſed. He himſelf formed the ſubſcription plan; though not in the ſhape in which it was carried into execution. To his honour be it remembered, he never pretended to beg charity of the public. But it will be neceſſary here, for the benefit of ſuch as have neither acceſs behind the ſcenes, nor the moſt authentic intelligence from thence, to develope a little the management of the puppets; and although (as has often been obſerved) this may abridge the pleaſures ariſing from the *Deceptio Viſûs*, the ſpectators will be more than made amends by the profit of inſtruction.

We have already noted his political demiſe. Confuted, expoſed, overcome in every conteſt by the tranſcendant abilities of all-powerful Pitt*; *croſſed* at laſt and beat by the R——l

* This phenomenon of the preſent age, although beloved by few, is reſpected by all mankind, and the moſt popular man in the three kingdoms. He poſſeſſes all the oratorial powers of his father, all the magic of his eloquence: the one captivated the heart, but rather over-awed than convinced the underſtanding; the other never fails, at once to convince, inſtruct, and delight. If he appears to be void of that ardent ſpirit of enterprize, that uncontroulable and unaccomodating confidence, which diſtinguiſhed his father, he is endowed with a judgment more diſcriminating, and more profound; which generally ſecures the ſucceſs of his meaſures; and he is entirely free from thoſe party prejudices, which in ſome degree leſſened the value of his father's character. He is rigidly tenacious of all thoſe eſſential principles which conſtitute the baſis of a juſt moral character; but in matters of ſmaller import, conducts himſelf with a gentlemanly, accomodating facility, agreeing perfectly well with the air of a court. Thus his evi-

dent,

R——l Jockey; deſerted by his maſters the Whig lords (who will be among the laſt to conſent to an Agrarian law) not a ſhadow of hope remained to this political trader. The ſtatute appeared with all its horrors, but the neceſſity of ſubmiſſion was

dent, and acknowledged ſuperiority, occaſions no jealouſy among his colleagues in office; with whom he not only lives perfectly at eaſe, but in a ſtate of friendſhip. His diſmiſſal of a late Lord Chancellor (the favourite of royalty) was a proof of his vaſt power; at the ſame time his ſuffering that lord (who affected an overbearing ſuperiority in every thing, to which his moderate talents gave him no juſt claim) to continue in office ſo long, was a ſufficient evidence of his moderation. He has embraced a ſingle life, as if to dedicate himſelf intirely to the ſervice of his country; and all his pleaſure ſeems to centre in the duties of his ſituation. Riches are not his object, nor ſplendour, or extravagances of living; for amidſt the greateſt opportunities that a ſubject can enjoy, of amaſſing even princely treaſures, William Pitt is not rich; it ſeems to be an object nearer his heart, to increaſe the wealth and proſperity of his country. Nothing can be more juſt and appropriate, than the epithet of "The Heaven-born Miniſter," uſually applied to this wonderful and exalted character. He was raiſed to his preſent arduous ſituation a mere youth, without experience of his own, or the aid of party connection for his ſupport; yet he, in an inſtant, manifeſted his ſuperiority over the moſt experienced orators and politicians, both in the ſenate and the cabinet. They, who from a well-grounded opinion of his abilities, and fitneſs for the office of Prime-Miniſter, elevated him to that expoſed and perilous height, ſtill expected to find him a ſubmiſſive executor of their will, and a pliant defender of their meaſures: but they ſoon, like the reſt of mankind, felt his ſuperiority; and that, inſtead of an humble inſtrument they had found a maſter. He began his political career, with profeſſing the Whig principles, in which he had been educated, with an apparent ſtrong bias towards democracy; and thoſe who know his character beſt, will believe he was ſincere; but he gradually adopted, from his new connections, the more practicable, and more philoſophic doctrines of modern Toryiſm; and whoever is deſirous of obtaining, a clear and accurate idea of his principles, muſt ſeek it in the pages of David Hume, whoſe zealous diſciple he is. This change of opinion, the conſequence of riper years and more mature experience, he need not be aſhamed to avow; for there can be no truer indication of a little, narrow, and contemptible mind, and a groſs ignorance of our nature, than an obſtinate adherence to either opinions or reſolutions, for no better reaſon, than that they have been once adopted. On all great queſtions of human liberty, he is moſt orthodox; of which we have an illuſtrious proof, in his propoſal to emancipate the ſlaves; whilſt the pretended

was equally apparent. It was ſaid that the Pharo-bank, held in Co. between Lord Robert and this gentleman, had not of late been ſo productive as uſual, either from that game loſing ground in the faſhionable opinion, or from ſome other cauſe;

pretended great champion of liberty, Charles * * *, denied that government poſſeſſed the power of ſo doing; thereby acknowledging the right of tyranny. To all complaints, founded on the real grievances of the ſubject, he yields a ready and willing attention; and as from his unlimited knowledge, the reſult of the higheſt degree of ability, and the moſt unwearied application, he is the beſt judge of their grounds, and the practicability of remedy; ſo from his natural turn to juſtice, his inflexible political honeſty, and his being wedded as it were to the intereſt of the ſtate, his countrymen have the beſt reaſons to be ſatisfied, that his ſtrenuous endeavours, for the gradual and judicious reform of thoſe abuſes which exiſt in our ſyſtem of government, will never ceaſe but with his life. He at firſt owed his elevation to the mere opinion of his abilities, and their reality has preſerved him in it, without the ſmalleſt aid of political intrigue, which other miniſters of inferior genius, and inferior virtue, have found ſo indiſpenſible for their ſupport: and whatever changes, in the political hemiſphere, may ſupervene, this great man, exalted above his fellows, by his high deſert, and ſelf-ſupported by his own innate virtue and conſequence, will remain unaffected by them; and will, at all events, be either the miniſter of the crown, or the miniſter of the people. At preſent, he is both the one and the other.

It is with pleaſure we trace every feature in the political character of this truly great and eminent perſon. Born to the poſſeſſion of a judgment ſupremely correct, he has been able to reconcile and harmonize the moſt oppoſite qualities in his own and the minds of others, and to render them ſubſervient to his great ends of governing. The love of rule, is the prominent trait of his character; but that he might be uniformly ſingular, his love of juſtice is equal to it; a truth of which every circumſtance of his life is a proof. Naturally haughty, diſdainful, diſtant, ſtately—but a thorough maſter of that moſt ſublime of all philoſophical acquirements, the knowledge of one's ſelf; he has, nevertheleſs, without any mean compliances, on one hand, or any of the baſe and vulgar arts of obtaining popular applauſe on the other, firmly eſtabliſhed himſelf in the minds of both prince and people, by the mere force of deſerving it. And although his vaſt influence is ſufficiently conſpicuous to all parties, yet none ſeem diſpoſed to ſhew the ſmalleſt uneaſineſs on that account, or to wiſh it leſs. In his conduct towards a certain illuſtrious heir, we ſcarce know which to admire moſt, the inflexible integrity of the man or the abilities of the courtier. Whilſt

that

cauſe; or that the latter gentleman was obliged to quit the concern for want of capital to bank with. It could not be ſuppoſed that the ſlender income of his Protrectreſs, was ſufficient for people accuſtomed to the *neceſſaries* of high life. Immediate preſſures were to be attended to. The ideas of ſelf-preſervation, naturally preſent to us in extremities, dictated to him, the abſolute neceſſity of enterprizing ſomething for his immediate relief, and future ſupport, ere poverty, which levels all, in the eye of an intereſted and undiſcerning world, ſhould at once lower him to inſignificance. With much propriety, he made inſtant application to the opulent heads of that ariſtocracy, for whoſe intereſt, as well as his own, he had been ſo long labouring; and required of them an aſſiſtance, proportionate to his neceſſities and his ſervices.

Very much to the credit of their œconomy, if not of their generoſity, they demurred;—and in lieu of acceding to his propoſal, ſubſtituted the ſcheme of a public ſubſcription, the event of which is well known. This accounts for certain rumours which at that time were current, of an uncertainty whether or not Mr. *** would condeſcend to the meaſure.

That he did ſo, we ſhall very willingly place to the account of his diſcretion; nor ought, in common juſtice, the ſhame and diſgrace of ſuch a meaſure to light upon him; but upon thoſe, who after having employed him in their ambitious purſuits ſo

that young ——— ſeemed to be the determined aſſociate of gamblers, buffoons, and ſharpers, it was beneath the dignity of Pitt's character, to pay his court in ſuch company. But no ſooner did the natural good ſenſe of the ——— reclaim him from ſuch follies, and regain him the confidence of his R——l Father, than we find the miniſter diligently purſuing the proper meaſures, both to conciliate the favour of the riſing Sun and to deſerve it. The world need not be told, that he has ſucceeded. In this laſt judicious and neceſſary ſtep, we behold the completion of his plan; and we are not conſcious of the ſmalleſt riſk, in pronouncing William Pitt the greateſt politician, and the beſt miniſter, that has appeared in theſe kingdoms ſince the Reſtoration.

many years, had ſo ſlender a concern for his intereſts, and ſo little complaiſance for his feelings, when they thought proper to lay him by.

It is impoſſible to paſs over Mr. ***'s conduct reſpecting the proclamations without animadverſion. Never was he more degraded, by the folly of indiſcriminate, and uſeleſs oppoſition, than in that remarkable inſtance, of miniſterial triumph and popularity. Never ſhall I forget the figure of poor ***, that evening in the houſe, with his crack'd and hiſſing voice, and empaſſioned geſtures, clenching his fiſt at the miniſter, and upbraiding him with the egregious injuſtice of withholding from a diſintereſted party, the good things of the National Treaſury. Talking about Whigs, God wot! and the hereditary virtues, and the proper mode of obtaining power, and of public good, and the conſtitution! and, to heighten the exhibition, the unhappy gentleman appeared ſincerely to believe all he uttered—and he was the only one on either ſide the Houſe, who believed a ſyllable of it. I have obſerved through life, that they who cultivate ſyſtematic deception have a temporary belief, which they aſſume ſo naturally in the heat of argument, as to deceive even themſelves, as well as thoſe whom they are deſirous to perſuade; as romancers tell their fabricated tales ſo often, and ſo ſeriouſly, that they come at length to queſtion themſelves, whether or not they are real. Methought I heard the lamentable ſqualling of an old apple woman, whoſe nonpareils ſome unlucky boys had beat down and ſtolen away. He and *the rump* of his party muſt ſurely have been urged by a moſt phrenetic deſperation, to attempt acting offenſively, and to make long ſpeeches, againſt the common ſenſe of nearly the whole body of their countrymen.

The conduct of the preſent adminiſtration for vigilant circumſpection and prudent forbearance, during the firſt attempt to ſow the ſeeds of diſaffection by the promulgation of the

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works of Paine *; and for thoſe ſtrong and dignified meaſures afterwards, of iſſuing the proclamations, and of putting the country into a proper ſtate of defence, was certainly never excelled by the ableſt ſtateſmen of any time or country; and was a proof highly honourable to themſelves, and ſatisfactory to both king and people, how well they deſerved the great truſt repoſed in their hands. The arguments made uſe of upon this occaſion by their opponents, conſiſting of long-ſpun and continued ſophiſms, which derive weight ſolely from the quantity of words, like ſolid nonſenſe, are almoſt unanſwer-

* Thomas Paine is an irregular and eccentric character. Fortune certainly played him a ſcurvy trick, when ſhe made him a ſtaymaker, inſtead of a law-maker, which Nature intended him for. Paine's writings, teem with all the enthuſiaſm of Prynne, and the inſolence of Shebbeare, conveyed in the vulgar hum-drum ſtyle of Daniel Defoe. They contain the moſt uſeful and important truths; but, like all enthuſiaſts, he is perpetually breaking ground to the *ultra* ſide of that medium, without the bounds of which, nothing can be proper or eſtimable. Had he publiſhed his improvements of the principles of liberty, and modeſtly, and with due deference to our ſettled opinions (which ſurely deſerved ſome reſpect) adviſed us to engraft them on our monarchical ſyſtem, inſtead of inciting us to civil broils and rebellion; he had been received with applauſe, and had gained riches and honour in this country.

Perhaps it is one of the moſt wonderful occurrences upon record, that a man in his right ſenſes ſhould come into a country, the government of which was firmly rooted in the affections of the people, and publiſh a book, with his name prefixed to it, to inſtruct them in plain terms, that it was their duty to riſe inſtantly, dethrone their king, and entirely change their form of government. And that ſuch a man ſhould be ſuffered to eſcape with his headupon his ſhoulders. The Republican governments are cried up for their mildneſs. Tell me, I pray ye, gentle Republicans, what would be the fate of an apoſtle of royalty, who ſhould go over to happy France, at this time, and openly declare his miſſion? Or to that political paradiſe America, for the purpoſe of telling the Americans that the Preſident and Congreſs were all rebels and traitors; and that they ought all to riſe as one man, overturn their preſent government, and return to their allegiance to King George? But what would a man have to expect who ſhould go to preach freedom, and the rights of man, to the five hundred thouſand miſerable ſlaves, whom thoſe deteſtable hypocrites, the Republicans of America, hold in perpetual bondage?

able. It is ſufficient to ſay, that books were openly publiſhed and diſperſed with a zeal and induſtry, which indicated no common attachment to the cauſe, not merely to inſtruct the people upon the comparative merits of the different forms of government, but to tell them, in the moſt direct terms, that the republican form was the only legal and advantageous one; that the preſent, under which they lived, was not only illegal, but alſo deſtructive of their common rights and intereſts; and that they ought, after the example of France, to riſe immediately, dethrone their Monarch, and eſtabliſh a Commonwealth. Theſe ſentiments were openly profeſſed by a conſiderable number of the old republican party. Their pulpits began to reſound with the rebellious doctrines of the laſt century, heightened and adorned with all the modern Gallic improvements. The governing powers in France had already publiſhed their intention of co-operating with, and aſſiſting the diſcontented ſubjects of any country, for the profeſſed purpoſe of rooting out monarchy all over the world. Our republican ſocieties opened a public correſpondence with the French National Aſſembly. French emiſſaries arrived here, and ſo conſiderable a progreſs was made in diſſeminating their principles among the common people, that it became very uſual to hear treaſonable expreſſions, from the mouths of individuals * of that claſs.—Nobody I believe doubts, but that the hare-

* The truth of this was ſo notorious, throughout all the year 1792, that to pretend to doubt it, or even to treat it as a matter of little conſequence, has a moſt ſuſpicious appearance. The author has frequently heard labourers cry out, "Damn the ——, what uſe are K——s of? I wiſh his head was cut off, like the French K——'s." No doubt, but conſiderable pains had been taken to diſſeminate ſuch uſeful doctrines. The following is not a tale fabricated for any party purpoſe, but the public may be aſſured it is literally fact, in every particular. On the afternoon of laſt St. Thomas's day, I had occaſion to croſs a field near town, where ſome new buildings were going forward. I ſtopped to witneſs a moſt pleaſing ſpectacle to me, who am an enthuſiaſt in every thing relative to horſes —that

hare-brained zeal of this party, however contemptible in point of number and conſequence, miſtaking the diſcreet ſilence of government for imbecility, would have proceeded to the moſt dangerous extremities, had the proper remedy been longer procraſtinated. With the aſſiſtance of France, and under a weak and diſhoneſt adminiſtration, this proſperous country might have been ſet in a flame, and brought to the brink of deſtruction. There are men who will diſpute or laugh at ſuch concluſions as theſe; which perhaps leaves it beyond diſpute, that they would have had no objection to their being realized. Many a warm head ſeemed bent upon accommodating its neck with a halter. The humanity and preventive care of the miniſter, whom they affect ſo much to deſpiſe and condemn, has preſerved them. If the *amor patriæ*

—that of a carter managing three of thoſe noble animals, (which were ſet with a heavy laden cart) with an uncommon judgment, and at the ſame time with the utmoſt tenderneſs and humanity. The darkneſs approaching, I was glad of the company of an Engliſh Sans-culotte, who was going my way, acroſs the fields. He turned out to be of the order of St. Criſpin, and appeared a man of good mental abilities, and contemplative. According to a faſhion lately introduced among the lower claſſes, it was natural for him to turn the converſation to the new order of things. He told me, he had but the day before cauſed his name to be ſtruck out from the liſt of a *Correſponding Society*. They were his words. His reaſon was, that he apprehended danger in it. To my queſtion, as to the views and intentions of this ſociety, he anſwered as follows: That the firſt ſtep meditated was to procure a parliamentary reform. That being obtained, they ſaid it would be eaſy for the Houſe of Commons to vote the Peers uſeleſs; and that afterwards the office of king would fall of courſe. He then ſaid, they talked of an equal diviſion of all the property in the kingdom; remarking, that he was well convinced, the rich would never conſent to that. I aſked him what deſcription of perſons, this Correſponding Society conſiſted of, and with whom they correſponded, or whence they received their inſtructions. He replied they were chiefly journeymen taylors, ſhoemakers, &c. out of work, but he knew not from whom they obtained their plan, only that there were ſuch ſocieties formed and forming all over London.——All this needs no comment.

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in the breaſts of Republicans leaves room for ſentiments of generoſity and gratitude towards individuals, they will acknowledge the obligation to the end of their lives.

Anon behold a pamphlet is announced in the public papers, written by the great orator, on the ſubject of the grand political queſtion, in the form of a "Letter to the Electors of Weſtminſter." All the world is agog, expecting with impatience the enjoyment of Mr. *** 's literary maidenhead. The book is publiſhed, and read by all parties with diſſatisfaction; by the world in general, becauſe it contained nothing either new or to the purpoſe; and by his own friends in particular, as a work very much below his ſuppoſed ſtandard of ability. It was however a very harmleſs piece of mediocrity, containing a ſeries of reaſoning intended to be inſidious and covert, but which failed of its effect from being too ſuperficial. A tiſſue of thoſe political veriſimilitudes, which are for ever leading this ſelf-will'd enthuſiaſt into pools and ditches. A ſomewhat plauſible and tolerably elegant and perſpicuous diſcourſe on the miracles—to be performed by French virtue and French valour. In fine, ſuch a ſhilling's-worth of ware, as any one of the great orator's underſtrappers of the Morning Chronicle or Poſt, was equal to the taſk of manufacturing. *Parturiunt Montes, naſcetur ridiculus Mus.* —I cannot diſmiſs this famous work, without quoting a text which I think will turn out an additional proof, how very eager, how extremely adroit, this warm-headed gentleman is at deceiving himſelf. The critical and diſcerning reader will ſmile at the immenſe labour the following lines ſeem to have coſt him:—"The conqueſt of France!!! O calumniated Cruſaders, how rational and moderate were your objects! O much injured Louis XIV. upon what ſlight grounds have you been accuſed of reſtleſs and immoderate ambition! O tame and feeble Cervantes, with what a timid pencil and faint colours

colours have you painted the portrait of a diſordered imagination!"—The very notes of admiration muſt have their weight!

And did ſuch an event, as the conqueſt of a large country, never happen? Was France never conquered? Will not the heavieſt end of the balance preponderate, in deſpite of your unſubſtantial and ſhadowy metaphyſical cauſes?—and are not German numbers and German diſcipline, ſupported by the immenſe power and reſources of this country, an equal match for the fierceſt ebullition of Gallic enthuſiaſm?

But in ſpeaking of the legitimate and acknowledged offſpring of Mr. ***'s brain, we ought not to paſs over in ſilence thoſe by-blows of the pen, which are not the leſs his own, becauſe he does not publicly father them; eſpecially where the family reſemblance is too ſtrong, *and evidence of another nature too forcible*, to leave us in doubt for a moment. Not that we mean to inſinuate, that it can diſgrace a man of however exalted rank, to contribute his ſhare in thoſe daily vehicles of intelligence, the news-papers, towards enlightening the public mind. We have nothing further to remark on Mr. ***'s numerous and modeſt recommendations of himſelf in the Morning Poſt, as the only perſon, at this day in England, capable of the arduous duties of Prime Miniſter, than that here again his uſual wayward fortune attended him;—he could perſuade very few of his countrymen to be of his opinion. Leaving theſe minor proofs of his diligence, let us beſtow a ſmall ſhare of our attention on the profeſſed apology for his political conduct, and that of his quondam aſſociates the Whigs, which appeared in the Morning Chronicle, for the purpoſe of exciting the charity of well-diſpoſed individuals.

Nor ſhall that take up much of our time, any more than it did that of king or people; who did not ſeem much to reliſh the complaints and expoſtulations of a ſet of men, who with ſuch becoming modeſty, inſiſted upon an excluſive right to govern

govern both *nol. vol.* and to be well paid for it into the bargain.

No arguments can ſurely be required, to confute ſuch a poſition, as that the heads of certain families poſſeſs an hereditary right to the higheſt offices in the gift of the crown, merely becauſe their anceſtors, a century ago, had a chief hand in forming our preſent eſtabliſhment. Even if put on the foot of gratitude on the part of the ſovereign, it falls of itſelf to the ground. The evils of ſuch an impolitic and unjuſt preference, had been but too apparent, during the preceding reigns; and might have involved the reigning family in the moſt ſerious miſchiefs. But the ſtrange ſuperſtructure, built upon this ſandy foundation, by the Whigs of former days, and adopted of courſe by Mr. *** and his friends, is diſgraced by more than original abſurdity. It ſeems whenever it ſuits their turn, ſome latent ſpirit in our conſtitution is to be quoted in oppoſition to the letter of the law, which inveſts the king with the *abſolute* power of chuſing his own miniſters. According to Whiggiſh conſtruction, the ſovereign poſſeſſes certain other prerogatives by law, which however he may not exerciſe at his diſcretion. For example, although the king's power to diſſolve a parliament, ſtands upon preciſely the ſame legal foundation, which ſupports my undoubted right to my freehold eſtate, yet if the majority of the ſaid parliament ſhould conſiſt of Whigs, I am told ſuch an exertion of power, though legal, would be unconſtitutional. What is this but a revival of the old claim of a diſpenſing power, with the additional diſadvantage, of placing it in hands ſtill more dangerous, than thoſe where it was formerly ſuffered to reſide? A dangerous ariſtocratical doctrine, from which precedents may as well be drawn, in oppoſition to the plaineſt rights of the ſubject, as the legal and acknowledged prerogatives of the crown.

That abſolute power in the Monarch of England, to

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ſelect * from whatever rank of his ſubjects he pleaſes, men of virtue and talents, to manage the public buſineſs, is equally conducive to the general intereſts, as it is neceſſary to the dignity and independence of the crown. In a monarchy, conſtituted like ours, it is one of the great duties of the prince to reſiſt and break all ariſtocratical combinations, to diſcountenance *all ſuch as will either come in or go out in a body.* Theſe bodies when out, we muſt own, profeſs to act upon the moſt patriotic principles, but when in, if pampered with the public ſpoil, ſeldom ſcruple to pimp to the moſt arbitrary exertions of power.

Thanks to the political mantle of a certain Elijah, there has been very little ground of complaint on this head during the preſent reign.

It is impoſſible to preſerve one's natural gravity, whilſt reflecting on the ridiculous diſtreſſes, and untoward events, which have happened to Mr. *** and his party of late years; the world of money they have ſpent in hiring two-legged horſes to draw their great patriots; and in ſupport of news papers, to explain at full length their immenſe ſervices and capacities to an ungrateful and unheeding people.

One grand reaſon, perhaps, why Mr. *** was never popular, is, becauſe he was ever too much a ſlave to his own prejudices to indulge thoſe of other people. There could not be a more unfortunate piece of ſelf-complaiſance, than that of his ſuffering himſelf to be dubbed *Man of the People*, by a few of his own party; without either the people's ap-

* A certain noble Duke (whoſe fears for the ſafety of thoſe good things, without the poſſeſſion of which the Ducal Coronet is a mere bauble; occaſioned him to vote with the preſent adminiſtration) remarked in the Houſe of Peers, that he ſhould never forgive the miniſters for the manner of their getting into power.—No; nor for their keeping in it neither, one may ſwear for him. There are alſo thouſands yet in this country, who cannot forgive the memory of that monarch, who laviſhed the riches and honours of England on the family of Mynheer B.

probation or conſent. The truth is, it has not appeared hitherto that he poſſeſſes thoſe talents, or thoſe virtues, neceſſary even to attract their notice; far leſs to engage their predilection. Pity, that a man who, by his own account, has been all his life labouring for the good of his country, ſhould be ſo extremely unfortunate as not to be able to convince his dull or ungrateful countrymen of the utility, or even the exiſtence of theſe labours, by the moſt voluminous apologies! *His* * *own Hiſtory* of his Political Life, his pamphlet, his elaborate columns in the Chronicle——all, all thrown aſide, unregarded, uncriticiſed, unread! But he would be a patriot, he would ſave us in ſpite of ourſelves. He would be prime Miniſter too—but, ah! touch not that tender ſtring! He would be called by the ſweet name of Man of the People; and yet, *lamentabile dictû!* no ſoul has ever acknowledged his right to that appellation but his own godfathers. For what part of this united kingdom is there, in which, if a man were to aſk his neighbour, Who is the man of the people? The anſwer would not inſtantly be, William Pitt!—Nothing has ſucceeded with this miſerably patriotic party.—No man owns or will pronounce their *Shiboleth*. They have never even poſſeſſed intereſt enough in the caprices of the multitude, to give currency to a by-word; and have been reduced to the miſerable neceſſity, of bandying about *Alarmiſt* from one to the other, among themſelves; becauſe nobody elſe would be at the pains of ſearching either for the wit or meaning of it.

Let us examine whether Mr. ***'s ſentiments, expreſſed at the ſeaſon of convivial hilarity, when even the moſt contracted hearts expand, are more indicative of his knowledge and love of true philoſophical freedom, or of his blind attachment to the narrow and bigotted prejudices of a party. To

* I cannot vouch for the truth of it; but I have heard that the modeſt Charles *** reviewed, in manuſcript, that inſipid piece of wordy mediocrity, called his Political Life.

begin

begin with his favourite toaſt, "The cauſe for which Hampden bled in the field, and Sidney on the ſcaffold." A precious cauſe, truly! That of hypocriſy, deception, prejudices religious and political, and the luſt of power. Had thoſe Worthies, together with about a dozen more, of the knaves and fools of that unfortunate period, made a timely exiſt at Tyburn, or in their beds of the *morbus pediculoſus*, or of the French pox, or had had their reſtleſs brains beat out by the fall of an old houſe, or in any manner whatever, ſo that the world had been well rid of them; it had ſaved the lives of ſome ſcore thouſand of their countrymen, honeſter men, and better citizens than themſelves. Not but ſuch patriots have their peculiar uſe and province in every country; that is, to do dirty work, for which honeſt men are unfit. And we may well obſerve of theſe, as Swift did of certain other benefactors of mankind, that they are almoſt invariably greater nuiſances than thoſe which they pretend to remove; and that they would have a much clearer title to the glorious name of Patriot, and it would be equally for the public benefit, would they, as ſoon as their deſtined taſk was finiſhed, but juſt take the trouble to finiſh * themſelves. We ſet thieves to catch thieves; we expel poiſons by the power of other poiſons; but it ſurely ſtands us in hand, to take care, that we are not robbed by our auxiliary thieves, nor poiſoned by our remedies.

The patriotic attempts in thoſe days, to reduce the unjuſt and exorbitant power of the crown, were glorious in themſelves, and abſolutely the indiſpenſable duty of every Engliſhman. For tyrannical power, whether civil or political, is a mere nullity in obligation, and binds no man's conſcience;

* The author has ſufficient reaſon to believe, that there are millions at this day in France, who would contend which ſhould firſt ſay Amen! to this ſentiment; but for a certain modern invention, of ſovereign uſe to preſerve the appearance of unanimity.

and lawfully may, and ought to be reſiſted unto death, in whatever time or country, or upon whatever pretence of cuſtom or antiquity, it may be founded; becauſe it is in direct contravention of thoſe unalienable rights, with which nature inveſts every human being at his birth: and becauſe a legal, that is a juſt and equitable government of man, who is evidently formed for civil ſociety, is not ſo.

From the imperfection of human nature, and the conſequent approximation of moral virtue and vice, good and evil, the truth and eligibility of a *medium*, irrefragably maintains its ground, throughout every poſſible circumſtance, relation, and contingence of human affairs. In theſe enlightened times, it requires only a moderate portion of philoſophy, with a ſufficient ſhare of common honeſty, in the governing party of the day, to ſtrike upon the true *political medium*.

But the heads of the faction, of which we are ſpeaking, unfortunately for their country, were endowed with but a faint glimmering, or rather an *ignis fatuus* of the former, and were without a ſingle atom of the latter qualification, of all others the moſt deſirable in public men. Actuated by the moſt gloomy, and at the ſame time the moſt contemptible and ridiculous ſpecies of fanaticiſm that ever turned the brains of a civilized people, they pretended or really believed themſelves commiſſioned from on high, to enforce the eſtabliſhment of their peculiar religious forms and notions; and were reſolved upon effecting their mad project, even at the expence of half the blood of the nation. From having been accuſtomed long and ſullenly to brood over the exceſſes of regal power, as yet untempered by the mild influence of reaſon and philoſophy, they raſhly concluded that monarchy was incompatible with liberty. The ſame red-hot zeal which goaded them on to the deſperate meaſure of changing the religion of their country, alſo drove them to overturn its political conſtitution, and to ſubſtitute in its place another,

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in which their own theoretic prejudices only were conſulted (as is uſual among zealots) inſtead of the intereſts and inclinations of the people. Granting that in the leading faction of the parliament, the real and determined republicans were but few; the remainder, who compoſed the majority, blinded by their prejudices, and ſtimulated by the luſt of domination, were bent upon the eſtabliſhment of a ſyſtem, infinitely leſs advantageous to the country than a pure republic. The plan of monarchy they meditated, would have been of no ſort of benefit to their country, unleſs the mere defraying the expences of the pageant might be ſo called; but its eventual dangers muſt have been very evident, at that time, to all diſcerning men, whoſe underſtandings were unfettered by prejudice, and unbiaſſed by intereſt. Delivered from the danger of being diſſolved by any power but their own, by the wonderful inadvertence and folly of the King, they got both the crown and the people into their clutches, and it was not the fault of theſe *be-toaſted* and immortal patriots, that Britain is not governed by a tyrannical ariſtocracy at this day. If it was neceſſary to preſerve the monarchy (and in what period of Engliſh ſtory does not a predilection for that form of government appear to be univerſal?) they had already circumſcribed the power of the crown within bounds ſufficiently narrow. So very narrow, indeed, that they might very juſtly have apprehended the moſt ſtrenuous oppoſition of a majority without doors, who were inviolably attached to the fundamental rights of the crown. Here all true Patriots left them, to join the party of their ſovereign, who was driven reluctantly, with a ſad heart and inauſpicious omens, into a civil war, for the defence of his juſt rights as a King, his honour as a gentleman, and of the liberties of his people, which had been illegally ſeized upon by a corrupt and intereſted conſpiracy of their fellow-ſubjects.

I have often reflected, that there cannot be a more ſtrik-

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ing proof of the badneſs of the parliament-cauſe, than the wretched apology, made in thoſe days for its conduct, in precipitating the country into all the horrors of a civil war; and which every Whig writer ſince ſeems to have been laid under the neceſſity of adopting. "The Parliament could not truſt the King." No, truly, they had other purpoſes than to truſt either him, or a new repreſentation of the people, with the power and patronage which they had gotten into their hands (not too honeſtly) and of which they found the poſſeſſion ſo ſweet. But are we thus to exculpate the memory of an accurſed and execrable cabal, who deprived the crown of deſpotic power for no better purpoſe than to aſſume and exerciſe it themſelves?—who aboliſhed inferior arbitrary juriſdictions, to erect one in their own high court, where they might conveniently and with certainty commit legal murder upon their opponents?—who ſcrupled not by fraud and treachery, and the practice of the moſt infamous machinations, to rob a juſt, magnanimous, and well-intentioned prince of his undoubted rights, and who, ſeizing upon the revenues of the ſtate, plunged the nation in a war in which their very victories proved their own ſhame and degradation—in which one hundred thouſand native Britons died!

The reaſons are ſufficiently apparent why the Long Parliament could not truſt the King. But whom could the people of England have truſted with a moderate ſhare of power, with ſo much ſafety and propriety as their lawful monarch, to whom they had ſworn allegiance?—whoſe unblemiſhed integrity no one pretended to doubt?—who had ſeen the neceſſity of dividing with them that plenitude of power poſſeſſed by his anceſtors? A breach of thoſe conditions to which he had acceded, would indeed have been a juſt ground of war; but no ſuch ſtigma lays againſt his faithful and honourable character.

That the honeſt enthuſiaſm of the people of thoſe times ſhould

ſhould be miſled by intereſted and deſigning men, is not to be wondered at; but it ſurely evinces the exiſtence of a conſiderable fund of prejudice amongſt us, that the memory of ſuch men ſhould ſtill be flattered, for their very vices, and their errors.

Another reference to this calamitous æra of our hiſtory will furniſh (in my opinion) an additional teſtimony of Mr. ***'s inveterate party prejudice, and ſuperficial reflection.

In adverting, in the Houſe of Commons, to the recent murder of the French King, and making a compariſon between that and a ſimilar event in our hiſtory, if I miſunderſtood him not, his language implied a doubt exiſting in his own mind, reſpecting the juſtice of the ſentence executed upon the unfortunate Charles. At any rate, he told us plainly, that if either of thoſe barbarous meaſures admitted of apology, it muſt be that of the Engliſh parliament. The truth appears to me, and I truſt it will to all unprejudiced perſons, to reſide preciſely in the reverſe of the propoſition. Granting the inviolability of the French King's perſon, by thoſe laws to which his ſubjects had ſo recently ſworn; granting the total defect of legal evidence; yet few will be found diſpoſed to deny the moral certainty of his guilt, as to the fundamental part of the charge brought againſt him. In my mind at leaſt, there remains no doubt of his concurrence in thoſe meaſures, taken by the confederated powers for the preſervation of the French Monarchy; the total ſubverſion of which, it required very little political ſagacity to foreſee, was from the firſt reſolved upon. A ſoftneſs and milkineſs of nature in the miſerable and paſſive Louis, invariably inclined him to benevolence; but a narrow intellect, an unconquerable love of eaſe, and a total want of all dignity of character, ſuffered him to fall into meaſures pregnant with danger, diſgrace, and infamy. The wretched King tamely ſuffered inſults of the moſt degrading kind from his rebellious ſubjects, meanly attempted to ſteal himſelf

himſelf away from them, and was retaken with circumſtances by no means likely to enhance the worth of his character. His conſtitutional timidity, and dread of reſolute meaſures, led him to engage in an underhand game at hazard, with Adepts, who were much too profound, and too great proficients for him. The obvious aim of each of the contracting parties was to over-reach the other. Louis accepted the ſhadow of a crown, by way of keeping ſome footing, and of enabling him to put in again for the ſubſtance the firſt opportunity. His ſubjects, it muſt be confeſſed, had ſet him a rare example on the ſcore of perjury. The Convention (that is the managing party in it) reſolved from the firſt upon the eſtabliſhment of a Republic, in which both their prejudices and their private intereſts concurred; but apprehenſive of the riſk of diſcovering the full extent of their deſigns at once, they aimed at cajoling Louis for the preſent, that they might with the greater ſafety afterwards lay him by.

Every candid and humane man will pardon the duplicity of a well-meaning, but weak and indolent monarch, whoſe wayward fortune had precipitated him into a dilemma too critical and momentous either for his talents or his virtue, whilſt he deteſts the ſanguinary and barbarous character of his nation; and with a throbbing and indignant heart, calls aloud upon the princes of the earth, for vengeance upon the guilty heads of that execrable and murderous horde of raſcals, to whoſe apparent intereſt he was ſacrificed. But impartial hiſtory will do juſtice to the memory of the unfortunate Louis XVI. Not indeed by degrading perhaps the beſt of our Engliſh monarchs by a compariſon with him, in which there is not even the ſemblance of truth. Charles I. educated in the boſom of religious and political ſuperſtition, parted reluctantly, and by degrees, with a power which he had been taught to believe he held by divine right, for the benefit of his ſubjects. After he had, upon the importunity of the

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governing party in the Houſe of Commons, relinquiſhed more of the prerogatives of the Crown, than even that party itſelf had repeatedly aſſured him was either neceſſary or would be required; and when he was warned, by almoſt the whole body of the Peerage, and by all upon whoſe advice it was reaſonable for him to depend, that any farther conceſſions would be as well deſtructive to the liberties of the people as ſubverſive of the throne, he boldly executed the laſt of his princely duties, by appealing to the ſword, and to the affections of the loyal part of his ſubjects.

This ill-fated * Monarch, calculated rather to confer eſſential benefits upon a people than to pleaſe them, drew his own character with great truth, when (in his youth) he ſaid, "That had he been born to the neceſſity of ſeeking his bread by a profeſſion, he could not have been a lawyer, becauſe he could not have defended an unjuſt cauſe."

* The author derives his materials, for the character of King Charles, from the ſource mentioned in note, page 17. Thoſe memoirs give a circumſtantial account of the plot for the delivery of the Earl of Strafford from the Tower; and the author of them, Hildebrand ******** informs us, he was to have had a principal hand in it. The plea made uſe of to perſuade the King was, that the Parliament had extinguiſhed all law; and that as it was evident an appeal muſt be made to the ſword, it mattered not how ſoon. That the King had been over-reached in ſigning the warrant for Lord S.'s execution, and that it behoved him to atone for ſuch a cruel indiſcretion. Laſtly, that there could be no doubt but the Parliament would take his life, as being convinced of the immenſe value of it to the King, in the approaching conteſt; which ought to weigh, in the ſame proportion, with his Majeſty. It ſeems this juſt and neceſſary meaſure, which the writer of the Memoirs ſays could ſcarce have failed of ſucceſs, was laid aſide at the preſſing inſtances of Mr. Hyde, and two other perſons, whoſe names are not mentioned. The ſame writer obſerves, after the King's ſucceſſes at the beginning of the war, and when the army had advanced within a few miles of London, and it was debated whether or not they ſhould proceed; his Majeſty, coming from council, ſaid to him, "We are never reſolved, Hil. whether fortunate or otherwiſe; there be ſome, I ween, among us, who have more dread of our ſucceſſes than of our defeats." Had Lord Strafford been alive and preſent, the civil war would not have laſted three months from that period, in the opinion of the writer of the Memoirs.

His underſtanding was highly reſpectable, both for depth and quickneſs of parts; but was of that peculiar and unfortunate caſt, which can comprehend and examine all the various appearances of things, without poſſeſſing ſufficient power of deciſion to make a choice. He appears to have been one of the very few who love virtue purely for her own ſake. In him, too great ſincerity was both a virtue and a defect; for he diſguſted all men by the forbidding, though unreſerved opening of his declarations; which even a ſuavity of language, and gracefulneſs of demeanor, could not palliate: and, as it generally happens to ſuch characters, he who was reverenced and reſpected by all, was beloved by none. As an eulogium upon the honeſty and diſcernment of the world, we may add, that his ſon and ſucceſſor won the love of all mankind, by a ſmooth and inſinuating addreſs, which never coſt him a real and voluntary intention to ſerve any one.

The charge of inſincerity, ſo conſtantly attached to the character of Charles the 1ſt, by party-writers, appears evidently expletory, a ſubſtitute for ſomething they deſired but could not find. The defenders of his honour might ſafely allow it. Are his defamers ſo unreaſonable as to expect a naked and unguarded ſincerity in a man, whilſt he is treating with thoſe who make uſe of all kinds of fraud and deception?

> Who, with known cheats, ſhould play upon the ſquare,
> Would be undone.——

There is but one circumſtance, in his turbulent and unfortunate life, where his honour and integrity can poſſibly be called in queſtion. Every finger will point to that deadly and fatal act of imprudence, his ſigning the warrant for the execution of his great and faithful miniſter Lord Strafford.—The evidence is before us. We are at liberty to confront the preſumption, that a faithful ſervant might be ſacrificed upon

upon the altar of imperious neceſſity, with the apologies offered on the ſide of royal indiſcretion and credulity.

For my own part, my mind has long ſince been made up upon the ſubject. Had Charles ſurvived his misfortunes, and been re-eſtabliſhed upon his throne, with his mind purified by adverſity, and enriched by experience, he had borne away the palm from all the Kings of the earth.

By a tranſition, but too natural, we paſs from a conſideration of the moſt calamitous æra of our own hiſtory, to reflect upon ſimilar ſcenes of madneſs and devaſtation which have been for ſome time acting in a neighbouring kingdom; where the Pyms, Hampdens, Cromwells, and Iretons of the day, are deluging their miſerable country in blood, in ſupport of vain and fantaſtic theories, and in the true ſpirit of thoſe tyrants, whom they ſo loudly condemn, ſacrificing millions of their fellow-creatures to their own inſatiable appetite of power. In viewing this tremendous ſcene of folly and wickedneſs, the firſt idea that ſtrikes the mind of a Briton, muſt be that glorious and encouraging one, of the decided ſuperiority of our national character. We are no longer at a loſs to determine, who are to be ſtiled the ſavages of Europe. Let the philoſopher view the conduct of each nation, in times of civil diſſention, when all the paſſions are afloat which blacken and deform the human ſoul; when men, drunk with enthuſiaſm, and emboldened by the general licence, diſcloſe their moſt ſecret propenſities; and he will diſcover in the character of the French of the eighteenth century, more of perfidy, revenge, blood-thirſtyneſs and cruelty, than is to be found in the darkeſt and moſt unpoliſhed periods of Engliſh hiſtory.

To form an adequate judgment of thoſe tranſactions which have lately paſſed in France, to the amazement of all other civilized countries, or of their probable reſult, it is neceſſary firſt of all to advert to the national character. To

deny that there are good and bad in all countries, would be a puerile folly; France has bred ſome of the beſt and moſt enlightened men that have yet appeared in the world; but for real honeſty and benevolence of heart, I make no ſcruple of rating the general character of the * French below that of any other nation in Europe.

In that country, the demon of ſelf-intereſt—the true original ſin in human nature—the baleful ſource of every miſchief and every crime, has been immemorially the object of more univerſal homage than in any other of the whole civilized world. Gallic falſehood and treachery were not more proverbial than true.

Exterior grace, volubility of ſpeech, and vehemence of profeſſion, were all you had a right to expect in a Frenchman, in lieu of the ſolid and noble virtues of the heart. The ſyſtem of deception was general, one and indiviſible; nor were even the ties of blood any longer regarded, when they chanced to come in competition with dearer intereſt. This debaſement of principle was not confined to rank, ſex, or condition, but appeared alike to pervade all ranks, oppreſſors and oppreſſed; the latter of whom were as venal, cringing, and unprincipled, as they were tyrannical and hard-hearted whenever fortune put it in their power. For many years paſt very little of religion has exiſted in France, except the name, and hyprocriſy its common ſubſtitute. Even their boaſted loyalty to their prince has long been nothing more

* I cannot, in common juſtice, help making an exception in favour of thoſe unfortunate exiles who have found an aſylum in this country. It is impoſſible to conceive a more orderly, inoffenſive, and humane ſet of men. It is worthy to be obſerved too, that they are totally free from that mercurial and flippant behaviour which we formerly ſuppoſed conſtituted the very eſſence of the French character; and that they are generally of fuller bodies and larger ſtature than we expected to ſee Frenchmen. It ſeems as though the Aſſembly had taken pains to drive out what little virtue their country poſſeſſed from among them.

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than a mere echo of the prevailing paſſion of former times! The ſource and the ſtreams of juſtice were alike polluted by a univerſal corruption, which put every thing up to ſale! All things had their price, even to the chaſtity of their wives!

I cannot ſufficiently wonder that the eyes of a certain ſubtle and eloquent * writer of our country, were unable to trace thoſe great offences in France, which cried to Heaven for a revolution. Surely, in a country immenſely populous, where wealth was ſo unequally divided; where the ariſtocracy of property ground and oppreſſed the poor; where ſo much remained of ancient barbariſm, both civil and religious; and where were ſuch a number of able and enlightened

* Mr. Burke's celebrated pamphlet for beauty of compoſition, energy of eloquence, and acuteneſs of ratiocination, is far ſuperior to any publication of the preſent day; but, unfortunately, in his very groundwork and foundations, although he reaſons juſtly, it is from wrong principles: and amidſt the pleaſures which play around our minds, from the charms of his wit, and the ſplendid graces of his diction, we yield, reluctantly, to the intruſion of a regret, that a man of ſuch exquiſite talents, ſhould be every thing but a philoſopher. It is a ſevere ſatire on human nature, that ſo bright a genius ſhould be a mere party writer; and that, ſo ſeriouſly prejudiced, as to be abſolutely blind on the oppoſite ſide of his argument. The old maxim, *omnis repentina Mutatio eſt periculoſa*, excellent as it undoubtedly is, ſeems to have obtained too ſtrong a hold upon his underſtanding. Life is ſhort—what follows is uncertain. They who profit by abuſes, will be ever tenacious of them. Give us our rights, while we are able to enjoy them.

The mind of Mr. Burke is ſo fully impreſſed with ideas of the wiſdom of paſt ages, that he ſeems to retain no recollection of ancient barbariſm; to feel no joyful and exulting ſenſations on account of modern ſuperiority, and the improved and ſtill improving condition of the human race. Has he forgot, that in thoſe ages of Chivalry, which he deſcribes in ſuch rapturous terms, that the great body of mankind were groaning under the dreadful yoke of ſlavery, impoſed upon them by lawleſs, arbitrary, and unlettered chieftains, and a ſuperſtitious and mercenary prieſthood? and that their abſurd and partial laws and regulations, ſeem to invert the very order of nature; inaſmuch, as in the room of being calculated for the general benefit of all, they ſeem to embrace no other views than thoſe of confirming the uſurped prerogatives of the rich and great, and of perpetuating the oppreſſion of the lower

enlightened men, both poor and diſcontented; nothing but the opportunity was wanted of ſome violent change in the political conſtitution? Unhappily for himſelf and his houſe, and for a great part of the preſent generation of his ſubjects, the feeble Louis was but too ready to afford the occaſion.

The French Revolution (like almoſt all others) is at once a ſubject of triumph and degradation to human reaſon; the fond hope of philoſophy, and yet a dreadful ſtab in the boſom of philanthropy. Hard fate of miſerable mortals! that the ſyſtem of nature ſhould require juſtice, and the amelioration of the condition of humanity, to be purchaſed with ſo much blood, and ſo many ſufferings! There are periods in all go-

lower claſſes. Inſtead of a ſuperſtitious veneration for the pretended wiſdom of thoſe early ages, I think we have much greater reaſon to pride ourſelves on account of the ſuperior light of modern times, which has been ſo well employed, during the preſent century, in the correction of ancient follies and abuſes. There is, however, to our ſhame and regret, ſtill too large a doſe of *the wiſdom of former ages* in our Statute Books. God knows when there will ariſe among us a Hercules ſtrong enough to cleanſe that *Augæan* ſtable!—I fear this beautiful book of Mr. Burke's will be the ſource of much miſchief, perhaps of much blood. It can work no reformation with one party, on account of its evident partiality; and it will ſerve to ſtrengthen and confirm the other in their intereſted attachment to old abuſes.

There are ſome remarks in Mr. Burke's book, which, for the ſake of his literary reputation, had been better omitted. It ſeems (without reading him through) he found Lord Bolingbroke a ſuperficial writer; and yet the learned world in general, with the moſt univerſal genius that ever lived at their head, have ſuppoſed Bolingbroke to have poſſeſſed profound as well as ſhining abilities. Were Lord Bolingbroke's Works too much *below*, or too much *above*, the level of Mr. Burke's capacity? The matter is at iſſue between them; one of theſe writers muſt needs be ſuperficial. But, I will venture to predict, this is a caſe which will not await the judgment of poſterity.

Wonderful diſcoveries have been made by ſome of our latter writers. One of them uſed to maintain, that Pope was no poet; but the gentleman was not acute enough to make that diſcovery of himſelf; though, unluckily, all the world very readily made it for him. Dr. Johnſon found Swift ſuperficial; and Gilbert Wakefield made a like diſcovery of Hume (of all men in the world!) and that he was, moreover, a wretched writer!

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vernments, when the deſire of change is ſo vehement and enthuſiaſtic in the great body of the people, that the whole power of the ſtate naturally falls into the hands of their deputies; and upon their honeſty and abilities, the immediate ſafety and future well-being of the country ſolely depend. But all popular aſſemblies are governed by a few artful men, whoſe ſuperior talents qualify them to take the lead; and who, by flattering the preſent diſpoſition of the people, mould every thing to their own intereſted purpoſes.

The firſt National Aſſembly, convened by the late King of France, inſtantly found itſelf in poſſeſſion of the whole ſovereign power of the kingdom. It was thoroughly tinctured with the general enthuſiaſm, and ſcorned any compromiſe with the old ſyſtem of tyranny and corruption. On the other hand, the court party, or ariſtocracy, comprehending all ſuch as were intereſted in the perpetuation of abuſes, ſtupidly inſenſible of their own weakneſs, were plotting againſt the united wiſhes, and the united power of the nation. The miſerable King, with the beſt intentions in the world, was become the mere ſhuttlecock of both parties.

From this ſtate of things, reſulted the abſolute neceſſity of the firſt inſurrections among the people; in order to carry conviction home to the breaſts of their tyrants, that they wanted not the ability, any more than the will, to aſſert the rights of human nature. The demolition of the infamous Baſtile, is one of the moſt glorious events recorded in hiſtory. An event, the recollection of which fills every humane and honeſt heart with rapture, and with the moſt ardent deſires for the acceleration of the fate of every other ſuch dreadful engine of ſtate tyranny in the world.

Here the benevolent man will make a pauſe, and drop a tear over the miſeries of poor ſuffering human nature;—whilſt the ſtern Machiavelian philoſopher will feel no commiſeration for an incorrigible race, nine-tenths of whom richly

richly merited the ſevereſt of thoſe diſtreſſes, heaped upon themſelves by their own miraculous folly and wickedneſs. The King, whoſe want of ability was certainly no crime, and who appeared to entertain as pure intentions towards his country as the beſt of his ſubjects, abſolutely loſt his cauſe, his crown, and his life, for want of a * man who poſſeſſed ſufficient diſcernment to know the real ſtate of affairs, and ſufficient ability to adviſe and to act in ſuch a criſis.

It might well have been foreſeen, before the States were aſſembled, that in the then temper of the nation, the crown poſſeſſed no poſſible defence againſt ſuch a numerous repreſentative body. That, after they were once aſſembled, it would avail but little to conſent to the redreſs of grievances, and would then be too late to make uſe of the army, for the purpoſe of continuing the old ſyſtem; one of which meaſures ought to have been adopted, in preference to the fatal one which was carried into execution. But, perhaps, it was too late to have rendered any propoſitions of reform from the old government acceptable to the people. A fatal leſſon this to all governments! But men are never warned by paſt experience, in oppoſition to the ſenſe of preſent intereſt; of the truth of which, the conduct of both parties in France, affords us a new and dreadful example!

The National Aſſembly now poſſeſſed the glorious opportunity, with all the neceſſary powers, to work the ſalvation of their country; with all the ſplendid lights of the new philoſophy—with the beſt examples before their eyes—with the ſingular advantage of having a King upon the throne whoſe heart was naturally turned to benevolence, and whoſe love of eaſe would prevent any oppoſition on his part, they

* Another Monarch once loſt Thirteen Provinces, for no other reaſon in the world than that his country, at that particular period, did not produce either a miniſter of ſtate or a general. There was one indeed who formerly had been a great miniſter, but unfortunately he was ſuperannuated.

might,

might, had they been endowed with the virtues of juſtice and moderation, have placed France on the higheſt pinnacle of human felicity. But, unhappily for the devoted kingdom, the mild voice of truth and philoſophy was unheeded and loſt, amidſt the thunders of enthuſiaſtic folly, and the turbulent harangues of intereſted intrigue.

Behold now the political cauldron boiling with tenfold violence, and all the froth and ſcum riſing to the top! Behold all the powers and prerogatives of the puiſſant and renowned monarchy of France, which had ſtood the ſhock of ſo many ages, divided and parcelled out amongſt a club of obſcure individuals, or of ſuch as were known only for their deſperate poverty, or their crimes!

If the firſt acts of theſe theoretical legiſlators were attributed to the intemperance of enthuſiaſtic folly, their ſubſequent conduct left impreſſions of a far different and ſtill more alarming nature upon the minds of all impartial obſervers. It required but a moderate ſhare of political knowledge and foreſight to deſcry the approaching annihilation of the monarchy, in a ſyſtem which, by removing every barrier between the crown and the people, not only rendered the former totally defenceleſs, but made the very office of a King a mere uſeleſs burthen to the ſtate. The groſs political foppery of that very important change in their monarch's title, from King of France to *King of the French*, their degradation of him, even below the hangman * in rank, argued neither a ſoundneſs of underſtanding, nor a purity of intention in the governing party.

Scarcely had ſufficient time elapſed for the people to become acquainted with the forms of their new Conſtitution, ere the authors of it began plotting for that farther and radical change which they had not ventured at firſt to

* The Nation, the Law, and the King.

propoſe to a country ever ſuppoſed ſo inviolably attached to monarchical government. Unhappily for the fame and the intereſts of Louis XVI. he ſuffered himſelf to be perſuaded, by men of more cunning than real judgment, and of perhaps not the pureſt intentions, to enter deeply into counter-intrigues, the ſucceſsful conduct of which, at ſuch a criſis, required the moſt conſummate ability, and the moſt auſpicious fortune. This fatal error afforded his enemies the advantage they probably laid in wait for, and which they could not have obtained had the Monarch preſerved his integrity.

The hiſtory of the Republicans of France, from the very commencement of their power, to the late unneceſſary, helliſh, and cold-blooded act of barbarity, the murder of a miſerable and helpleſs woman, preſents us nothing but a catalogue of the blackeſt deeds, of which the worſt human hearts are capable, debaſed by the moſt contemptible degree of enthuſiaſtic folly *. To be particular, or to name individuals, were totally unneceſſary; they ſeem all alike to have been actuated by the ſame frenzy of wickedneſs! the ſame greedineſs of the ſpoils of their miſerable country! the ſame thirſt of blood! the ſame treachery to each other!—and the next favourable wind may bring us intelligence that the Parricides of a preceding week have ſuffered the guillotine to make room for thoſe of the preſent.

* The foul, deteſtable, and impoſſible charge attempted to be fixed on this unfortunate Princeſs, forms at once the beſt poſſible defence of her moral character, and the cleareſt illuſtration of that of her judges and accuſers. And it is with theſe precious raſcals that the great and patriotic ſtateſman Charles *** adviſed his Sovereign Lord to enter into an alliance!!! I wonder my very ink does not turn red with bluſhes in relating ſuch infamy. I cannot, I will not, ſuppreſs a compariſon which has this inſtant preſented itſelf to my mind. It would be but to quench the ſpirit.—Theſe French fellows appear to be ſcoundrels of the ſame kidney with ſuch as accuſe people of unnatural crimes to extort money from them.

It is a melancholy reflection, that ſo large a body of the French people are involved in theſe ſcenes of guilt and infamy; and that they look upon the moſt atrocious deeds of blood and cruelty, not barely with indifference, but even with the plaineſt ſymptoms of ſavage delight. True philoſophy ſeems to have ſhed her influence upon this infatuated nation in vain; or, rather only to inflame and ſtimulate their baneful paſſions; as in ſome caſes of the body natural, aliments of the ſtrongeſt nouriſhment become the moſt deadly poiſons.

The truth, utility, and even practicability of the greater part of the principles contained in the French code, will be readily aſſented to by every philoſopher and advocate for human liberty. But are we to idolize the perſons of prieſts, for preaching virtues they never practice? Are we to reſpect murderers and thieves, and ſuffer them to eſcape with impunity, merely becauſe they abound in profeſſions of honeſty and humanity? For what part of their conduct do the French National Aſſembly deſerve our approbation, either with reſpect to their hearts, or their heads? With the moſt violent pretenſions to patriotiſm in their mouths, they rejected the moſt glorious, the ſafeſt opportunity that ever preſented itſelf for the ſalvation of a country! With the moſt ſolemn profeſſion of liberty and equality, they have eſtabliſhed the inquiſition of Spain, and the deſpotiſm of Turkey! With the pretence of leaving all mankind to the free enjoyment of their own ſentiments, theſe philoſophers waſh out all opinions, differing from their own, with blood! With peace and confraternity on their lips, they have defied and made war on all mankind!—With a frivolity truly French they have been gravely occupied in changing the names of the days, and the months, whilſt their country was ſurrounded by the hoſtile world in arms!

Unfortunately for the peace and happineſs of mankind, great and neceſſary changes in the affairs of the world are

ſeldom to be compaſſed but by the aſſiſtance of enthuſiaſm; and men, under the dominion of that paſſion, are but rarely diſtinguiſhed either for their honeſty or their prudence. They are blind to all difficulties; and the goodneſs of the end, in their opinion, gives a ſanction to the means, however cruel, violent, or unjuſt. It is ſaid, civil commotions call forth the energies of the human ſoul; that great occaſions produce men of great and ſhining abilities. Such occaſions alſo uſually bring forward men of talents, who are in deſperate circumſtances, from their misfortunes or their vices, and who having been oppreſſed by the ariſtocracy of property, which never feels but for itſelf, enter upon the public ſtage, fully reſolved to gratify their paſſions in turn. Men urged on by the fury of their paſſions, unimpeded by any ſcruples, and aided by a favourable conjuncture of the times, will ever be able to work ſudden and important changes in the political affairs of a ſtate, but too often with very ſlender obligations to reaſon and philoſophy.

For my own part I muſt profeſs myſelf, at leaſt in one reſpect, a diſciple of the celebrated Mr. Burke; I muſt own I never could yet diſcover that ſuper-eminent ability in any of the late or preſent leading men in the political affairs of France, for which they have been ſo highly extolled.

With the warmeſt predilection for the general principles of theſe men, I ſearch painfully into their conduct without being able to diſcover the traces of wiſdom, humanity, or common honeſty. All that I can find from the moſt impartial examination, is, that they have vilely bungled a moſt glorious cauſe. By gorging and nauſeating mankind with the furfeiting extremes of liberty, they have retarded its perfect accompliſhment in the world, for at leaſt a century; if they have not given it a mortal ſtab, of which it may not recover for ages. The maxims of philoſophy with them, like powerful drugs in the hands of half-learned and unſkilful quacks, have

have had the moſt violent and deadly effects upon the conſtitution. *Melior eſt prudenter agere, quam ſapienter cogitare.*—

Theſe men, like all ſhallow reaſoners, ſeem to attend to no arguments but ſuch as bring weight to their own ſide of the queſtion. With their attention eternally fixed upon the republican government of America, as a pattern for France, they have not reflected that there is no analogy of ſituation or conjuncture between the two countries. Sottiſhly heedleſs of the numerous examples upon record, of the danger and inefficiency of pure democracy, of its total unfitneſs for their country in the preſent criſis, they have erected the ſtandard of anarchy. Greedy of power and ſpoil, they have divided deſpotiſm with the ignoble multitude, ignorantly inverting the order of nature, by exalting the tail of the beaſt above its head, and vainly fancying their new-vamped old ſyſtem of repreſentation, like the Catholicon of the quacks, would remedy all political defects.

Precipitate, vain, confident, even beyond their national character, with a certain darling end in view, they ſeem totally blind to its inſuperable difficulties, and the incompetence of their means. Puffed up with their newly acquired authority, behold theſe Bobadils marching all Europe over in queſt of enemies! throwing down the gauntlet to all the kings of the earth, inſtead of purchaſing their neutrality by ſkilful condeſcenſions! deſtroying their reſources by all the folly of enterprize, inſtead of prudently reſerving and concentrating their power within themſelves! Neither do they appear to have evinced the ſolidity of their judgment, in the application of paſſages in the hiſtory of paſt times, to their own ſituation; and no doubt vainly expected to receive the ſame homage, and to ſtrike the ſame terror into other nations, with the republic of England; weakly overlooking

looking the total diſſimilarity of circumſtances in the political ſtate of Europe, between that period and the preſent; and that England, though ſtiled a Commonwealth, was then under the abſolute government of an able tyrant. It muſt not however be concealed, that with an intrepidity that will be recorded to their everlaſting honour, they have rooted out a cruel and relentleſs ſuperſtition from their country, which for ſo many ages paſt has contributed to thin the human race, and which has ever proved the moſt fatal obſtacle to the enlargement of human reaſon: but even in this (the chief among their few praiſe-worthy acts) theſe Tyros appear totally unequal to the taſk of ſubſtituting in its room ſufficient props for the cauſe of morality.

In fine, their vaunted philoſophy is miſguided enthuſiaſm or affectation; their virtue, a pretence; their abilities, conceit; their hold upon the people that of terror, not affection; their power, a bubble; and their exiſtence will be determined by the firſt ſerious attack.

But nothing could more fully evince the total want of judgment and information, in the National Aſſembly of France, than their miſtaking the clamours of certain inconſiderable Societies, for the voice of the people of England, unleſs indeed that act of inſanity which followed, their declaration of war againſt this country. By all the common rules of reaſoning one would ſuppoſe, that had they even ſuſpected war to be in the end inevitable, it was their obvious intereſt to have attempted to gain time, and to have deferred the evil day as long as poſſible. But who invited them into Holland? Their information from thence was of the ſame value with that which they obtained from England, at ſo great expence. And why ſend an army to Holland, any more than to Morocco? to fill General Dumourier's pockets, who had ſufficient addreſs to outwit thoſe ſage politicians his maſters.

I am ſorry to obſerve, that I have the beſt reaſons for being

being convinced that the French republicans had it in their election * to have preſerved peace with this country. I repeat, I am ſorry to obſerve it; for independent of the violation of treaties, and the groſs inſults offered to this country, I hold that our interference in favour of the oppreſſed party in France, was loudly demanded by honour and juſtice. I ſhall ever hold in the utmoſt contempt, that kind of logic, by which I am told that the ties of honour, which are indiſpenſible in individuals, ought not to bind kings and ſtates. If I am bound in conſcience, to aſſiſt a man under the hands of robbers and aſſaſſins, the caſe is parallel between nation and nation. Methinks the notion of the unlawfulneſs of one nation interfering, during the civil commotions of another, comes with the worſt grace in the world from that party who ſo loudly proclaim it. Have they forgot the interference of Queen Elizabeth in the affairs of the Low Countries—that of Holland in our domeſtic affairs at the Revolution—or the recent inſtance of their friends the French, who have aſſumed the right of interfering in all the governments of the world? The point of intereſt and policy in the nation interfering, and how much it ought to riſk to befriend its neighbour or ally, no doubt forms another queſtion.

It is ſaid, that the people of every country have a right to legiſlate for themſelves—we ſhall not queſtion ſuch right. But it is the faſhion to include certain other principles in this

* In one reſpect the conduct of ſtates and individuals is preciſely ſimilar—the unfortunate are treated in the ſame generous manner by both; and may either help themſelves, if they can, or periſh, as it may happen (a thing perfectly indifferent, as misfortune naturally implies all kind of in-deſert; and good ſucceſs, all ſorts of merit) unleſs they can clearly make out a caſe in which the patron's own intereſt is involved. Thus, if the cabal in France had joined prudence with their other numerous virtues, the Bourbons might have wandered Europe over, in miſery and diſtreſs, unaſſiſted, and in proceſs of time unpitied, as the Stuarts did before them.

general

general one, which we ſhall not only take the liberty to queſtion, but even to contradict in the plaineſt terms; namely, that Republican governments, or to make uſe of the faſhionable phraſe, the Repreſentative form, is the only one either legal or advantageous; and that Kings have no rights, independent of the mere will and pleaſure of their ſubjects. As to legality, every form of government is legal to which the majority have ſworn allegiance, provided ſuch form does not deprive the ſubjects of their natural rights. The natural rights of man are ſuch as he can enjoy, without prejudice to thoſe of his neighbour. God or Nature (for they are *ſynonima)* formed man for ſociety and ſubjection. Inequality is coeval with the creation—it made its firſt appearance in the world in bodily, afterwards in mental ſuperiority; and the unlearned multitude have no more right, from the ſyſtem even of nature herſelf, to govern themſelves, or to decide in matters of ſtate, than they have capacity for it. Nor is this dilemma greater than that of the natural inequality of perſonal qualifications, the dominion of force, the neceſſary ſubmiſſion of the minority to the majority, and the unavoidable inequality of poſſeſſions. Liberty and property are impreſcriptible rights, of which no human being, unconvicted of a crime, can be lawfully deprived; for laws, contrary to juſtice, are mere nullities. *Every government upon the face of the earth, in which theſe unalienable rights are diſregarded, is mere uſurpation, tyranny, and robbery; and may, and ought inſtantly, by a general inſurrection of the people, to be diſſolved and regenerated, upon the ſolid maxims of juſtice, and the general benefit.* It may be ſaid, Liberty and Property are indeterminate ideas. All the anſwer that can be made, is, every man owes a juſt portion of each to that government which affords him protection. The quantum muſt be left to the juſtice and diſcretion of both parties.

It will be farther urged, that it is indiſpenſible that the people have a voice in the government; in other words, are repreſented: I think not. Every government which ſecures the juſt rights of the ſubjects, is a legal one, however little it may partake of the repreſentative form. It would be madneſs, however, to deny the obvious excellence and utility of a repreſentative body in every ſyſtem of government, provided it be not too numerous; in that caſe it will ever be liable to degenerate into thoſe extremes of turbulence and anarchy, which diſgraced the democracies of ancient times; or the whole power of the ſtate will fall into the hands of a few leading men, as is the caſe in France at this day.

The rights of Kings reſt upon preciſely the ſame foundation with every other human right, namely, upon Convention; nor are we to look farther than the uſual ſolemn engagement of the contracting parties for the original contract. It is a uſeleſs ſpeculation to dive into remote antiquity, in ſearch of the origin of governments. It is ſufficient for us to be convinced, that ſubordination is the baſis of human happineſs; and that both nature and reaſon require the chief authority to be veſted in few hands.

If no expreſs contract ſubſiſts, or the exiſting one is incomplete, the rights of man are ever implied. A breach of the contract in either party authorizes an appeal to the ultimate arbiter of all human differences, the fatal ſword. What proof have we here that Kings have no rights, but ſuch an one as will diſſolve and overthrow every other human contract, both public and private, of government or property, and reduce us to the original ſtate of uncivilized nature.

To apply theſe principles to the caſe of France, I can diſcover no ſhadow of right, which the people of that country had to caſhier the houſe of Bourbon, excepting ſuch an one as would alſo have ſerved the Monarch for a pretence,

had he been able, and had chosen to have established pure despotism. The people of France had sworn allegiance to their Monarch, his heirs and successors; but, it seems, there exists, in the new order of things, a papal power of dispensing with the most sacred obligations amongst men. But in all the old establishments, oaths are exacted by force. And must not all governments necessarily be established upon the same principle? Is not the power of the sword, the corner stone upon which the present boasted system of France depends? Is there the *chearful* concurrence of a larger majority in that country, in favour of the Republic, than there was in favour of the Monarchy?—I am fully convinced there is not.

The instant the republican party in the National Assembly of France overleaped the true political medium, and passed the boundaries which divide natural and civil rights from usurpation, the royal house of Bourbon had a just and natural claim of support and assistance from every monarchy in Europe. But the French reformers were not contented with the enmity of the whole race of kings, princes, and priests, but with a wanton folly that would have disgraced idiots, they challenged the detestation of all the lovers of peace and good order in the world. By their matchless imprudence, they afforded their enemies every possible advantage, and rendered the combination against them popular in every country.

In no country was this effect more apparent than in England. Independent of all party considerations (and by far the most numerous party among us were sufficiently averse to the new French principles) the whole aristocracy of property took the alarm. They argued, and very justly, if these furious zealots are so bold and daring in the propagation of their levelling principles, and in the encouragement of the disaffected among us in their present depressed situation, and

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even whilſt they are ſurrounded with enemies, what have we to expect from them in the inſolence of proſperity, ſuppoſing the chances of war ſhould turn out in their favour? That reſtleſs and intriguing people had ever been the common diſturbers of the peace of Europe. They had become ſtill more ſo, under their new form of government, which appeared to be meditating political changes of the moſt dangerous and alarming nature in every country in Europe. The old rivalry between the two nations, which had for a while lain dormant, now ſprung up afreſh. There aroſe a general deſire among us of oppoſing French pretenſions, of aiding the cauſe of ſuffering loyalty, and of ſtrengthening our own ſecurity and intereſt by a reduction of French power.

Our wary adminiſtration, with a forbearance reſulting from true political wiſdom, watched the progreſs of public opinion, previous to taking any deciſive ſtep, and were guided by it. They enjoyed the ſatisfaction of ſeeing their conduct approved by almoſt all the men of worth, influence, or abilities, in parliament, who had formerly oppoſed them, and of nearly an univerſal concurrence in their meaſures amongſt the people. Conſidering the critical ſtate of affairs, at home and abroad, the temper of an apparently ſmall but deſperate party among us, which might acquire ſtrength and credit from French ſucceſſes, and that the popular diſpoſition evidently pointed to active meaſures, our Miniſtry could not, conſiſtently with common prudence, or even common ſenſe, have made themſelves reſponſible for an inactivity, from which might have ariſen the moſt fatal conſequences, both to ourſelves and our allies: but Gallic folly at length relieved them from the trouble of farther deliberation. It remained to the conſummate wiſdom, diſcretion, and modeſty of Charles ***, to come forward and pledge himſelf in the recommendation of a meaſure, ſtigmatized as infamous by the common ſenſe of mankind, and reprobated as

pregnant with danger and uncertainty by a unanimous agreement of all the ableſt heads in the kingdom.

It is amuſing to attend to the arguments of our Republican party, in favour of pacific meaſures. France, now under the dominion of the ſame prejudices with themſelves, is no longer (as heretofore) an object either of their terror or averſion. According to their account, we have nothing at all to dread from the introduction of French principles. So ſincere are they in their profeſſions, that there can be no doubt but they would receive as brethren and allies an army of Sans Culottes, who ſhould come over on the glorious errand of planting the Tree of Liberty in this country.

But all their forces are collected in ſupport of their grand poſition, that the preſent war is injurious to Commerce! As if every war was not neceſſarily ſo! As though private intereſts muſt never be made to ſubmit to public weal! We are gravely aſked, what profit we are like to obtain by the war? Are there then no other juſt and proper motives to war but intereſt and advantage; and muſt theſe always be purſued? If our joining the preſent laudable and powerful confederacy againſt the ambition of France, ſhould have the happy effect of diminiſhing the reſources, and abridging the power of that reſtleſs and graſping people; and of thereby deſtroying the ſeeds of future wars, our profit will be ample? The preſent is a war of honour! a war to ſave blood! a war undertaken for the noble and patriotic purpoſe of ſecuring to human ſociety and commerce, the bleſſings of permanent liberty, ſecurity, and peace!

They do not ſpare us upon the ſubject of the dreadful conſequences of war to the human race, and upon the glorious proſpect of eradicating the very grounds of it by their admirable new ſyſtem; to which, however, we are previouſly to wade through oceans of blood. Their lamentations upon the uſual and unavoidable horrors of war, are entitled

to an equal degree of reſpect with the deplorable whining of the Conventicles about election and reprobation. It is, and ever will be, the lot of humanity to be obliged to exerciſe the ſword as well as the plow; and our modern reformers have taken ample care the maxim ſhould not want illuſtration. The neglect and diſuſe of arms, is one grand cauſe of the decay and downfal of trading ſtates. It is, perhaps, the intereſt of this kingdom to avoid engaging in war as a principal; but we never ought to decline becoming auxiliaries in a juſt quarrel, unleſs very ſtrong political reaſons intervene.

Of the conduct of the war, and its probable duration, as far as I am warranted by the little information I have been able to obtain, I ſhall ſpeak my ſentiments as becomes an independent man; at the ſame time with that diffidence with which every one ought to be impreſſed, by the magnitude and uncertainty of the ſubject.

The celebrated hiſtorian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, very juſtly obſerves, that the ſucceſs of an invaſion depends on vigour and celerity, and upon the firſt impreſſion. He gives us a very pregnant inſtance of this truth, in the defeat and purſuit of Attila through the plains of Chalons.

Reaſon teaches us, and general experience ſeems to confirm the maxim, that the conqueſt of a country ought not to be attempted by a ſlow and regularly detailed method of military operations. It is but to offer to the people invaded every poſſible advantage, of which their ſituation is capable, at your own expence. Of all their wants, time is the greateſt, and you give it them. Are they unwarlike, or deſtitute of good troops, or good officers? By defeating, you diſcipline them.—Are they divided? You give them leiſure to unite, or you afford the governing party opportunity to ſuppreſs their opponents, and to eſtabliſh themſelves in the affections, or the fears of the people.

Nor

Nor is a commander in chief of moderate capacity, however great his knowledge and experience in his profeſſion may be, at all calculated for grand and important enterprizes. All the ordinary affairs of life, without excepting thoſe of war and the ſtate, are well enough conducted in their eſtabliſhed routine, by men of ordinary capacity; but it is for men of ſublime and original genius only, to ſeize and profit by thoſe great occaſions, which ſometimes preſent themſelves, for the benefit, or the deſtruction of the human race. If the ſubjection of a whole country is meditated, all the circumſpection, vigour, and confidence of tranſcendant abilities is required, to form and execute at once ſome grand deſign; the ſucceſs of which may ſtrike univerſal terror, and pave the way for univerſal ſubmiſſion. Even ſhould the firſt blow fail from misfortune, ſuch accident will rarely be attended with greater loſs or even greater diſadvantage to the main deſign, than the ſlow and conſuming operations of protracted warfare.

Under the circumſtances we are deſcribing, no object which can preſent itſelf is perhaps of ſo great conſequence, or ſo eligible, as an immediate and bold attempt upon the capital city; the ſeat of government, and the centre of all the energy and reſources of the country. A rich and extenſive metropolis is not calculated to make any defence; but the poſſeſſion of it will generally decide the fate of a kingdom.

It is well known to have been the original plan of the Allied Powers, to have marched an army immediately to Paris; nor is it eaſy to conceive what ſuch an immenſe force as they had on foot could poſſibly have to apprehend in the expedition, or that the enterprize could have failed of its deſired ſucceſs, had it been concerted with judgment, and executed with vigour. A more propitious ſeaſon for the attempt, could never have been choſen. France was in a ſtate of anarchy, without government, troops, or reſources; the minds of the people were not yet ſo thoroughly imbued with

thoſe

thoſe Republican notions which have been ſince inſtilled into them by their leaders, but that they would with joy have accepted any juſt and equitable form of government, rather than have plunged into the horrors of a civil war. It would be uſeleſs to repeat all the well-known circumſtances of the Duke of Brunſwic's unfortunate expedition; the world at large ſeems to be ſufficiently agreed in opinion, that it was neither planned nor executed in the ſtyle of Frederic the Great.

It was, at the commencement of this campaign (1793), aſſigned as a reaſon for laying aſide the deſign of attempting to penetrate to the Capital, that the French having had ſo long time to prepare themſelves, were then in too great force for ſuch an attempt. It might be ſo:—but was not alſo the force of the confederates immenſely increaſed? And are all theſe immenſe armies levied, and theſe mighty preparations ſet on foot, for no other purpoſe than to take two or three frontier towns and ſea ports, and then to proceed regularly into winter quarters, to rot and moulder away? And is this the courſe to be continued, year after year, until the French royaliſts have executed the main buſineſs themſelves? If this be the intended plan, I (who am a diſtant obſerver, and have no pretenſions which ought to make me very confident of my own judgment) cannot help thinking it had been infinitely better to have left the French royaliſts to their own exertions; affording them only preſent aſſiſtance of money, and ſuch after-aſſiſtance of troops as the occaſion might warrant. I believe if a fair calculation could be made, the preſent ſlow and cautious method of conducting the war, has already been, and is likely to be, attended with more expence of blood, and riſks of every kind, than would have enſued from enterprizes of the moſt gallant and determined complexion. If preſent hopes, fears and prejudices, did not uſually outweigh all experience, we might

might reaſonably hope that the hiſtory of the American War would be to the confederated powers, both a memento and guide.

Nothing is more eaſy than a repetition of the American farce, even without putting Sir William or Sir Henry at the head of our armies. The only aim of the allies, it has been aſſerted, is to ſeize upon ſuch parts of France as may beſt ſuit their intereſt and convenience. But how are ſuch conqueſts to be retained, unleſs they alſo overturn the exiſting government?

Should ſome grand attempt be made, and ſhould it be attended with ſuch an unfortunate event, as to oblige the confederates to put an immediate end to the war, it were far better ſo than to be obliged to relinquiſh their object, after four * or five bloody, expenſive, lingering, and diſgraceful campaigns.

I am, however, far enough from ſuppoſing, that granting the war ſhould unfortunately be protracted to the length hinted at above, it is at all probable it would even in that caſe turn out in favour of the French; who are, like ſpendthrifts, living upon their unproducing capital, and whoſe reſources are ſo far inferior to thoſe of their numerous and potent enemies: nor can I tell what powerful reaſons may poſſibly have occurred to forbid or retard thoſe ſteps which I have ſuppoſed ſo neceſſary. The difficulty of ſubſiſting a numerous army, in an exhauſted country, may be one. I cannot ſay, that the reaſonings of the wary and diſcreet diſciplinarians of the preſent day, leave any material im-

* I am informed by a foreigner of diſtinction, who knew the French court well, and is equally well acquainted both with the preſent ſtate of affairs in France, and with German politics, that the French (unleſs ſome great and deciſive blow is ſtruck) will be able to hold out three or four campaigns. That there are now two parties at Paris, both equally obſtinate; one for acting intirely upon the defenſive, the other for collecting an immenſe force during the winter, and riſking all in the moſt deſperate manner.

preſſions

preſſions upon my mind. Nor can I, after what I have heard and read, believe it to be a phyſical impoſſibility, to march one hundred thouſand men from Germany, into the heart of France, without a hundred thouſand * waggons. There are ſome warriors of high renown in this country, beſide Major Hanger, to whom I would recommend, after they have re-conſidered the actions of Turenne, Marlborough, Kouli Khan, and Frederic of Pruſſia, to dip a little into the hiſtory of the Buccaneers of America.

Suppoſing an army of the confederates, to the amount of a hundred thouſand men, were before Paris, which is tantamount to the ſuppoſition of their being maſters of it, I do not heſitate for a moment to declare it as my opinion, that there would forthwith be a period put to the date of the Republic, one and indiviſible.

It is not preſuming too much upon the natural extravagance of the French character to ſay, that in ſuch a caſe I ſhould expect to hear the mob had ariſen, and maſſacred their late tyrants; or, at leaſt, delivered them up to the conquering army, with halters about their necks; for, beſides the natural inconſtancy of the people in all countries, the practice of that barbarous and Aſiatic tyranny, adopted by the preſent government of France, clearly indicates the neceſſity of it; and that the obedience of the people is to be preſerved by no other means. Was the preſent odious and bloody ſyſtem of Republican deſpotiſm once diſſolved, I ſee no reaſon to doubt but that the majority of the French people would again readily and cheerfully ſubmit to a legal and limited monarchy. It is well known there are millions yet in France conſcientiouſly devoted to kingly government; that millions are neutral from regard to their intereſts, or terrified into ſilence and ſeeming acquieſcence by a ſyſtem of peremptory and deſpotic cruelty, ſuch as modern

* Vide the lucubrations of Lady Wallace and Major Hanger.

Europe has never before witneſſed; and which was left for the great apoſtles of the Rights of Man, that we of the preſent age might not be without an eminent example and warning *how naturally all extremes meet.* The Jacobins know their ſituation to be deſperate; they know there is no alternative for them but victory or death; they know there is not a country, upon the face of the habitable earth, which can or will afford them an aſylum; they ſee that even treachery will not aſſure them impunity;—why, then, need we wonder at their reſolute and determined perſeverance? or, that they are able to uphold their power, when they have obtained full poſſeſſion of the ſword, and uſe it without ſcruple or remorſe againſt even bare ſuſpicion.

Thoſe who are verſed in the hiſtory of revolutions, and who are ſenſible of the immediate force and influence of an eſtabliſhed tyranny upon a people, will not be deceived by an apparent unanimity. If there is any faith to be put in hiſtory, the good people of England appeared to be as firmly attached to their newly-erected Republican form of goverment, and as unanimous in their deteſtation of Kings, as our neighbours the French are at this hour, and yet embraced the firſt fair occaſion of re-eſtabliſhing Monarchy. The populace of London, which expelled the innocent and unfortunate Charles, with execrations and curſes, welcomed home his ſon and ſucceſſor, with tenfold acclamations. *Vox populi Vox dei.*

The conduct of the allied powers has been freely cenſured, in that they have never been ſufficiently explicit as to their real intentions towards the French people; nor ever ready (notwithſtanding their numerous armies diſperſed here and there) to ſend any aſſiſtance of troops to thoſe parts of France which were inclined, or already in a ſtate of counter-revolution. Of the latter I ſhall decline ſpeaking. As to the former part of the charge, what with the famous manifeſto

of

of the Duke of Brunſwick, and the deſpotic character of the German courts, it muſt be acknowledged the French could not entertain very ſanguine hopes that any regard would be paid to their liberties, at leaſt until after the acceſſion of the Britiſh nation to the league, which afforded them ſome ſecurity. The declaration of the King of Great Britain, it is ſaid, came too late; and on that account excited ſuſpicions. It is moreover urged, that to have had the deſired effect, this manifeſto ought to have expreſſed in terms more clear, preciſe, and unequivocal, the pure and friendly intentions of our Monarch towards a *free people*. France * may be brought to accept a limited monarch; the French, naturally attached to ſplendor and pageantry, after the preſent gloomy fit of madneſs has exhauſted itſelf, may be yet reconciled to an order of nobility, diveſted of the old barbarous and oppreſſive feudal powers under which they formerly groaned: but whatever party goes about to eſtabliſh a national religion in that country, will light up a fire, which rivers of human blood will be unable to quench! It is impoſſible to renew impoſitions once thoroughly detected. Religious ſeeds will never more vegetate in the purified ſoil of France. Let a man of but a moderate ſhare of humanity, make a retroſpect of 1793 years, and take account of the maſſacres, wars, treaſons, murders, aſſaſſinations, and of the whole black catalogue of evils, which

* Theſe are the ſentiments of a member of the French National Aſſembly, and a Jacobin. I am well ſatisfied, in my own mind, that I could name *three men*, the moſt violent declaimers in favour of Republicaniſm, who wiſh for nothing ſo much at this moment as the peaceable reſtoration of Monarchy. Let the reader but recollect the number of theſe violent democrats, who at different periods have been intriguing to get out of the ſcrape, either from their having made their market, and being deſirous of ſecuring the ſpoil (like Dumourier) or from a bad opinion of the proſpect; and let him conſider the conſtant ſuſpicions which the cabal entertain of each other at this hour, and he will not think my opinion ill-founded. There will be more work for the guillotine at Paris before the winter is over.

overſpread the world, in conſequence of the adoption of the ſilly conceits of the Nazarenes, and he will confeſs that the human race has been already ſufficiently puniſhed for its brutiſh and credulous folly. He will be ready to wiſh that the earthquake, which is ſaid to have rent the vail of the temple in twain, had alſo ſwallowed up and ſunk to the centre of the earth, that accurſed race; that no record, tradition, or memory, might have remained of a people whoſe ſenſeleſs and impious opinions have brought ſuch iliads of miſeries upon mankind. He will acknowledge, that it is time the bonds of religious ſuperſtition were broken over the whole earth, that men may be brought to love the gentle yoke of morality; from the truths of which it is the very nature of hypocriſy to alienate their minds. Kingdoms, principalities, and powers! If you be juſt, you have no rational grounds of apprehenſion. There is nothing in the world more harmleſs and pacific than genuine reaſon and philoſophy.

But whatever may be the final iſſue of the war, the honour of the princes upon the Continent is pledged; their deareſt intereſts are at ſtake: they cannot, they dare not, relinquiſh it, until they have at leaſt reduced France ſo low as to put it out of her power to take her revenge. Many people will be apt to call out, two campaigns have paſſed, at an immenſe expence of blood and treaſure, and nothing has been done. Some few (and thoſe not the leſs deſerving attention on account of the ſmallneſs of their number) will venture to ſay, *Nothing has been attempted. Ex nihillo nihil fit.*

The French have again, it is ſaid, great apprehenſions that a large body of Ruſſians will be added to the number of their enemies the enſuing ſpring. Perhaps the Empreſs would render a more eſſential ſervice to the confederate cauſe, by ſending a good numerous army of Roubles.

Conſidering

Conſidering the preſent ſtate of France, it is likely there will be men enough both to decide the quarrel, and to eat up the country, without the aſſiſtance of Ruſſian arms, or Ruſſian mouths. But of all parties concerned, this happy country has the leaſt occaſion for ſolicitude on the ſcore of future events.

Our chief concern indeed is, that as a generous nation, we wiſh to puniſh perfidious rebellion, and to ſuccour the diſtreſſed. We have the happineſs to be governed at this criſis by a ſet of men, in whoſe ſteadineſs and caution their country has the moſt unbounded confidence. We have engaged in a war of honour; but our intereſts are now undoubtedly concerned in the farther continuance of it; for whatever turn the main buſineſs may take in France, we can ſcarce fail being gainers. The nations on the Continent will be exhauſting themſelves, whilſt we are adding to our ſtrength and reſources, by deſtroying the navy and foreign trade of France; and, in fact, by ſecuring to ourſelves the trade of almoſt the whole world. If we are ſucceſsful by * ſea, we ſhall be amply reimburſed the expences of the war.

The old objection againſt continental wars, which has been ſo often urged, and with ſo much juſtice and reaſon, bears no relation whatever to the preſent. That refers only (at leaſt with any ſolid reaſon) to our engaging as *principals* in a land war, to the neglect of maritime affairs, our proper province. Such groſs and impolitic miſapplication of the ſtrength of the country, no one in his ſenſes will apprehend from the preſent able and enlightened Miniſter. The total want of connections and allies, in ſome dangerous criſis, might determine our very exiſtence as a free people; and this country ever ought to be prepared to furniſh a quota of a few thouſand well diſciplined troops, whenever our neceſſary alliances upon the Continent may demand them.

* It ought never to be forgot, that through our navy only we are vulnerable. With what degree of ſafety, then, can the preſent war be concluded, until the French naval power is totally deſtroyed?

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If we are to be guided by thoſe writers, who ſo violently decried the treaty of Utrecht and the peace of Paris (and in their ſentiments all the Republicans in the kingdom concurred) it is ever the intereſt of this country to reduce the naval power of France, within the loweſt poſſible bounds. Surely then no opportunity like the preſent ever occurred before for the accompliſhment of that deſirable end! Never before had we France at ſuch an advantage! Never ſuch an opportunity of revenging ancient injuries, and preventing their repetition! Never ſuch a ſplendid proſpect of national aggrandizement, from deſtroying the whole foreign trade and navigation of our implacable rival, and of increaſing our own to the very ſummit of proſperity! So far from the preſent being a war with no end or profit in view (to adopt the former opinions of Republicans, and in that and in many other reſpects I heartily agree with them) it is highly probable to be the moſt advantageous and fortunate in which this country has ever engaged. As an *Old Cavalier*, I heartily pray to ſee heriditary monarchy and indefeaſible liberty judiciouſly blended together and firmly eſtabliſhed in France. But even if in the end, France muſt ſubmit to that cruel and tyrannical mob government, which at preſent degrades her and conſumes her vitals; we ſhall be amply repaid for maintaining a few thouſand troops there, if it be only as a ſtalking horſe, whilſt we are making conqueſts upon the ocean, and putting a finiſhing ſtroke to French power and influence in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies.

In whatever point of view it is conſidered, the policy as well as the juſtice of the preſent war ſtares one in the face. From making a judicious eſtimate of the temper of the times, the Miniſter (who, for ſkilful knowledge of human nature, has no equal) evidently ſaw the neceſſity of turning out a tub to the whale. He was driven by the circumſtances of the times (very reluctantly I believe) into the war, for the conduct of which,

which, upon the continent of Europe, he ought by no means to be accountable, as it is the joint concern of confederated powers, and obviouſly has never been under his direction. The management of that part of it, which is by far of greater conſequence to theſe kingdoms, the ſea ſervice, we may ſafely truſt will not diſgrace the glorious and patriotic name of Pitt.

But the difficulties which we may have to encounter, during the courſe of the war, I apprehend are likely to be trifling, compared with thoſe which muſt inevitably ſupervene upon the return of peace. To the man of reflection, and the true lover of his country, the proſpect is overcharged with the moſt ſerious alarms. To ſay that we are at the greateſt height of proſperity, viewing the great body of the people collectively, that any nation ever arrived at, and that our ſyſtem of government is the beſt, as being the moſt favourable to general liberty that has hitherto been eſtabliſhed upon the face of the earth, is only declaring a ſimple and literal truth. But it is equally true, that all the nations of the world have hitherto been the miſerable victims of violence and fraud, which under the names of Government or Religion, or of ſome ſuch ſpecious pretexts, have enabled an intereſted minority to oppreſs and prey upon the great body of their fellow-creatures. By degrees, this foul enchantment has been diſſolved. The devils have been at length caſt out by the Meſſiah's philoſophy, ſent on earth with a Revelation not intended to eclipſe, but to illumine human reaſon; and, by a general diffuſion of light, to ſave man from the cruel hand of man. We have proceeded gradually, until we have attained the very ſummit of the knowledge of Ethics. We learned, in the laſt century, that monarchy was not of divine right. We have proceeded, and are now convinced, that even ſuperſtition itſelf is not ſo, nor any thing but juſtice. St. Peter and St. Paul have reſigned their

their places in the Sanctuary to * St. Voltaire and St. Hume; and there are but two deſcriptions of people now, who do not plainly diſcover the traces of human cunning and ingenuity in the fabric of all religious ſyſtems; thoſe who ſuppoſe themſelves, or mankind in general, intereſted in their continuance, and ſuch as from the force of early embibed prejudices, are afraid to examine.

In this country, although we are compelled by the ſevereſt reaſon to allow, that the form of goverment, and its grand fundamental principles, are perfectly unexceptionable; yet that it is depreciated by ſome ſuperficial defects, which ought and muſt be remedied, none will deny, except ſuch as profit by them. The people now thoroughly enlightened, can be no longer withheld from the full enjoyment of their rights; but at the extremeſt peril to thoſe who undertake ſuch a diſhoneſt taſk. Our Republicans, if they do not poſſeſs the wiſdom and caution of their forefathers, have imbibed a double portion of their deſperation. Theſe well-meaning, but enthuſiaſtic madmen, blind to the truth of the ſmallneſs of their numbers in England, and void of all reſpect for the conſent and good-liking of the immenſe majority which is againſt them, would make no ſcruple of riſking their all, of waſting this earthly paradiſe, this centre of health, wealth, and happineſs, with fire and ſword, in order to force their favourite reveries upon us with the point of the bayonet. They are lying in wait fully determined. Some untoward conjuncture of affairs, a ſudden fit of diſcontent in the people, nay even the faſtidiouſneſs and wantonneſs of exceſſive proſperity, may give this faction once more the upper hand.

* The tranſlation of Volney's Ruins, has effected much in this country of what ſome people will ſtyle great miſchief; others great good. It is one of the moſt excellent books ever publiſhed; and I wiſh to recommend it warmly to all ſerious and well-diſpoſed Chriſtians, particularly Mr. Wilberforce, and Mr. Henry Thornton.

But

But, what is ſooner to be expected, the great body of the people, delivered from the danger and apprehenſion of Gallic exceſſes, will loudly and imperiouſly demand a reform: but, alas! we cannot hope that the nature of man will be changed, that preſent intereſt will ſubmit to the leſſons of experience, or that the compact phalanxes of profeſſions and bodies of men, who fatten upon ſpoil and oppreſſion, will ever ſubmit, until they are by force divided and broken to pieces. All former examples, even the late dreadful one of France, will have no effect. Theſe men, blinded by intereſt, will ſee no danger till the very train is laid which is to hurl them to deſtruction. Be it then the immediate care of government, by a timely and voluntary reform of *real abuſes*, to ward off the fatal blow from itſelf and the country, that they may not be involved in general ruin, for the wretched purpoſe of preſerving fraud and impoſition. Every candid and intelligent man will acknowledge the exceſſive difficulties under which Miniſters labour.

They are called upon, in the moſt violent and menacing terms, for the redreſs of grievances, which there is no doubt they would gladly remedy; but the methods propoſed have been ſo exceptionable, and the requiſition has hitherto proceeded from ſuch as have taken very little pains to conceal their determined reſolution, not only to amend defects, but to aboliſh foundations. Not to mention the general apathy and indifference of the people, to what may juſtly be called their deareſt intereſts, and the ſmall thanks a miniſter might chance to receive for his gratuitous and officious ſervices. There are abuſes too, which, perhaps, the Crown is not ſtrong enough to remedy. It was voted ſome years back, in terms quaint and ridiculous enough, * and altogether worthy of ſuch a ſapient

* The influence of the Crown has increaſed, is increaſing, and ought to be diminiſhed.—Muſical as modern blank verſe. The influence of the Crown

ſapient propoſition, that the influence of the Crown ought to be diminiſhed. Whither ſuch diminution would tend, no great political conjuration is required to gueſs. Either to ariſtocracy, by which the chains of our grievances would be more firmly rivetted; or to a turbulent democracy, which would never leave us peace and quietneſs, to enjoy the bleſſings it pretended to beſtow. Not that a democratic republic is without its merits; but, reſpecting the people of England, it has two defects; the grand one is, that it runs counter to the prejudices of a vaſt majority among us; the other, that after the moſt impartial examination, it is really inferior, in public utility, to the monarchical form. Experience, I think, has hitherto amply proved, that a King of England muſt poſſeſs influence; in other words, muſt make uſe of it; as the bare legal prerogatives of the Crown would be of themſelves inſufficient to defend it from the encroachments of democracy. When the ſubjects ſhall all become honeſt and patriotic, the Monarch may ſafely lay aſide his influence. If, in this neceſſary influence, any abuſes are involved, which require a remedy, it muſt proceed from ſome judicious compromiſe between the Crown and the people. All our grievances ſpring from the fertile ſource of ſelf-intereſt; from the ariſtocracy of property, which is everlaſtingly oppreſſive, and demands all the viligance of patriotiſm and philanthropy. We have need of the power of the Crown to defend us from ourſelves.

I ought, perhaps, long before now, to have craved pardon of my reader, for a breach of that condition upon which probably he was induced to look over theſe obſervations: to

Crown has been declared unconſtitutional; it has been declared equally ſo for the King to make uſe of his negative. See Mr. ***'s ſpeeches. This is the true picture of the Whig ſyſtem of monarchy, under which the people loſe the advantage of being governed only by one King (whom, if in an error, they might have a chance to convert or perſuade) to be placed under the domination of ariſtocratic bodies, which never feel, relent, or amend.

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wit, that of brevity; and I ſhall attempt to detain him no farther, than while I give my ſentiments, in a ſhort and curſory manner, upon ſome of the chief of our public grievances. In my opinion, they are of a twofold nature; ſome, as they do not immediately preſs upon the people, may ſafely be left to the ſlow and improving hand of time, or the opportunity of leiſure: but there are others, which I am fully convinced the people of this country (I mean the patriotic part of them) will ſuffer to continue but very few years longer. I ſhall only ſpeak of theſe—the chief of which are our laws of Debtor and Creditor, the Slave Trade, and our ſyſtem of Poor Laws (the wretched contrivance of barbarous and unenlightened deſpotiſm) both the ſpirit and letter of which are too much in oppoſition to natural and civil rights, to common juſtice and humanity. As to the conduct, form, and practice, of our law proceedings in general, it would be intirely ſuperfluous to take any pains to prove them calculated ſolely for the benefit of a profeſſion, whoſe intereſts are naturally in oppoſition to thoſe of their fellow-citizens, and the ſentiments of too many of whom ſeem to be in an equal degree eſtranged from the feelings of humanity. This overgrown and ſtill increaſing profeſſion, eating up the ſubſtance of the people like a canker, and fattening upon their misfortunes, far enough from deſerving encouragement of the ſtate, evidently demands the immediate hand of retrenchment before the evil becomes intirely inſupportable. Whether I have calumniated the profeſſors of law, let the world judge from this ſingle inſtance. To every attempt, made to ſoften the unjuſt and inhuman rigours of our laws of property, the Organs of the profeſſion have oppoſed a conſtant negative, accompanied with the daring effrontery of declaring, that no ſuch inhumanity exiſted in their ſyſtem. It is a taſk equally painful to attempt the explanation of a ſelf-evident propoſition, or the conviction of

the intereſted and prejudiced. Let us try whether the ancient mode, of ſpeaking by parables, will not be alſo inſtructive and uſeful on a modern occaſion. Let us ſuppoſe then, that a certain profeſſion, in ſome particular inſtance, had offended our ſovereign lords, the mob; and had wounded the Majeſty of the People ſo grievouſly, that nothing leſs than a bloody example would atone for the offence.

To proceed with our parable, let us feign that theſe impartial adminiſtrators and executors of juſtice, lay hold on the firſt ſage of the delinquent fraternity, who, unfortunately for himſelf, comes in their way; and that, as they are conducting him to the fatal lamp iron, he humbly addreſſes them as follows: "Brethren, and fellow-citizens, before you treat me in this inhuman manner, hear what I have to ſay in my own defence, and what I am ready to prove—this is the privilege of an Engliſhman, and indeed what no man can be juſtly deprived of. I am entirely innocent of what you lay to my charge; the majority of my brethren, indeed, concurred in it; but I, with a ſmall minority, far enough from enouraging, oppoſed it." Theſe ſtern legiſlators reply, "Brother, it would ſavour more of weakneſs than humanity in us to admit this plea. For the ſake of ſubſtantial juſtice, it is unavoidable, that the innocent ſometimes ſuffer with the guilty. It is ſufficient for us, that your profeſſion in general have deſerved exemplary puniſhment. Beſides, it would be quite inconvenient, and againſt our intereſts, to have our time taken up with attending to the proofs of your innocence; but we will graciouſly allow you time to ſay your prayers, that you may have the chance, in the mean time, of any divine interpoſition in your favour." Now let this be compared with the maxims and conduct of the callous and ſelf-intereſted profeſſors of a certain unpopular faculty towards the innocent and unfortunate.

The profeſſors of law, who have ever been ſo acute and ingenious

ingenious in the invention of ſhackles for human liberty, have never manifeſted the ſmalleſt inclination, or ſeemed to poſſeſs the leaſt ability, to find out the means of ſuccouring unfortunate indigence. Their notions, relative to property and debt, are as totally contrary to the lights of reaſon and philoſophy, and to the maxims of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian ſyſtems of religion, as they are infamous and deteſtable. Moſes, who lived four thouſand years ago, more enlightened and more humane than theſe Vandals, limited the term of debt with inſolvents to the period of ſeven years.

Our humane lawgivers tell us, if the moſt innocent and virtuous citizen in the world ſhould, from mere misfortune, be unable to ſatisfy his creditor, he ought to ſtarve in a goal, or remain there to the end of his days, dead to his country, and particular connections, although ſuch dreadful puniſhment can bring no poſſible fruit, to the inhuman and *diſhoneſt* wretch inflicting it, than a mere gratification of the baſeſt paſſions that diſgrace the human heart. But, in this caſe, the lawgivers of almoſt all countries have manifeſted a contemptible deſire to pander to the infernal paſſion of avarice, rather than to act the juſt and manly part of aſſiſting the cauſe of virtue, good morals, and public utility. Property, that king of kings, that ſovereign lord of all, that diſpenſer of all good, and arbiter of all fortune, needs not to be placed upon advanageous ground. The leading and congenial feature of its character is oppreſſion. It is equally the duty of every wiſe government to reſtrain its tyranny as to ſecure its exiſtence.

It is pleaded, that we cannot relieve the innocent, and truly unfortunate debtor, without alſo communicating the ſame indulgence to the criminal and unworthy. Then the innocent man muſt be puniſhed, leſt the guilty ſhould eſcape puniſhment! By the ſame juſt and humane rule, I ſuppoſe, if a murder ſhould be committed, and you could fix upon twenty

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men, *ſome of whom* muſt inevitably have perpetrated it; you would hang up the whole ſcore, leſt thoſe who were really guilty ſhould eſcape. As the noble patrician, whoſe humanity is tranſmitted down to us by the Hiſtorian Tacitus, inſiſted in the Senate, that in caſe a man ſhould be murdered by one of his ſlaves, the whole body of them ſhould be legally ſacrificed to his manes, by way of a leſſon of fidelity to all of that miſerable claſs who ſurvived. How different to this was the celeſtial morality of thoſe angels who were ſent down by the Almighty, expreſsly for the purpoſe of puniſhing two wicked and abandoned cities? Had there been only ten innocent perſons in them, the angels of God would have ſpared the cities for the ſake of thoſe ten only.

But to return to debtors. Muſt innocent and unfortunate men ſuffer, becauſe ſome have been fooliſh enough to truſt ſwindlers and raſcals; and who ought, therefore, to be accountable for their own folly? And what hinders the ſetting on foot an enquiry into the guilt or innocence of men, in this ſituation, as well as others? The ſacred and indefeaſible claim of property (granting it had any foundation) is no anſwer. You violate that every day in the Bankrupt laws, and in a hundred other inſtances of legal controul. And what, although the extravagant and the diſhoneſt are liberated with the innocent? Whoever credits them anew, deſerves to ſuffer by them. If ſome creditors are unavoidably deceived and injured, ſurely that cannot be thought of ſo bad conſequence as the murder of the innocent. But the indulgence contended for, would materially injure the intereſts of trade.—The trade of law is here meant, we preſume. —Thoſe cities of Europe, moſt famous for the wiſdom of their laws, relative to trade and commerce, have, for a century or two paſt, found it their intereſts to accept all the debtor had left in his power to pay, and then to free him from his engagements; and more then thirty years commercial expe-

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rience has convinced me, that it is the intereſt of his country to follow their example. Let any man, converſant in theſe unfortunate tranſactions, fairly calculate what he has loſt by the average of thoſe debtors whom he has * impriſoned, and from whom he has refuſed what they had at firſt to offer, including the loſs of humanity. Would every one do this fairly, repreſs his ſelfiſh paſſions, and think like a man, the queſtion would be inſtantly determined. But the blame lies not with the body of the people.—All the world knows for what intereſted purpoſes thoſe execrable and inhuman barbarities have been committed in our priſons: Savage man alone, does man deſtroy; *the day of amendment*, I hope, is not far off.

In what terms, as an Engliſhman, who imbibed the true Engliſh creed, with the firſt rudiments of language, namely, that every rational being inherited liberty as his birth-right from God the Father, with the co-equal right of defending it with his blood, am I to ſpeak of our abominable traffic in Negro ſlaves? Muſt I, from a mean complaiſance to opulent villainy, ſpeak in mild and extenuating language of a practice which includes every poſſible crime that earth or hell can invent or perpetrate? Can I, as a Briton, without bluſhing, palliate deſpotiſm? Can I, as a huſband devoted to his wife, with all the fervour of affection, as the father of a numerous offspring, more dear to me than my bowels and my blood, wink at a ſyſtem, which, by fraud and violence, tears the wife from the arms of her huſband; the huſband from the wife, and their infants from them both, for the horrid purpoſe of everlaſting ſlavery in a foreign land? Can

* Impartiality, as well as experience, compel me to ſay, that the power of arreſting the body of the debtor is equally conſonant to natural right, reaſon, and juſtice, as it is abſolutely neceſſary for the protection and ſecurity of property: at the ſame time, nobody will deny, that the practice and its concomitant expences are in grievous want of regulation.

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I, as an Engliſh Merchant, conſent to the continuance of an infamous and ſwindling monopoly, which has ſo long ſacrificed the intereſts of the great body of the people, to thoſe of a few worthleſs individuals, by enhancing the price of a now neceſſary commodity, to double its juſt and real value? Can I, as an experienced agriculturiſt, ſubſcribe to the opinion of the neceſſity of a mode of huſbandry, which is the burleſque of tillage, and the opprobrium of common ſenſe? A ſyſtem which is perſevered in by the conjoined prejudice and knavery of the two parties concerned, for the ſimple purpoſes of ſelf-intereſt, fraud, and deception.

No—I ſcorn ſuch baſeneſs.—I leave ſuch a taſk to the philoſophic apathy of thoſe who coolly tell us, that unleſs we continue a ſyſtem of commerce, in which are *neceſſarily* involved the ſtealing, buying, and ſelling of innocent men, women and children, murder, and the practice of the moſt dreadful tortures, ſeventy millions will be loſt. I ſay—rather than perſiſt in ſuch rank knavery, in ſuch bloody iniquity, let the ſeventy millions be at once ſunk in the vaſt abyſs, or in hell, with all thoſe baneful ſpots of earth which will not flouriſh but upon human miſery. Too long have the Perpetrators of theſe horrors been mildly reprehended, and gently admoniſhed, by their fellow-citizens. It is time to remind the latter, that by ſuch conduct they become acceſſaries in the guilt. In all matters of dubious conſtruction, the utmoſt moderation, patience, and complaiſance, is due from one fallible creature to another. But are we gravely to debate, and with the criminals themſelves too, upon the propriety of robbery and murder?

I regret that I have ſo little room to ſpare for this moſt preſſing and momentous ſubject; to which, in my eſtimation, the war which we are at preſent engaged in, or any other national matter that can be named, are but feathers in the balance. Remember, Engliſhmen, it is no leſs than the tearing from

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their country, by rapine, and in chains, murdering, torturing, and enſlaving of thouſands of your innocent fellow-creatures every year!

To begin with the queſtion in the abſtract, neither law nor cuſtom, in any country upon the face of the earth, can ſanction ſlavery, ſuppoſing the party unconvicted of crime; for juſtice is the teſt, or rather the eſſence, of all law; and an unjuſt law is a ſelf-deſtroying abſurdity. But to bring the matter home to our own boſoms, ſuppoſe an Engliſhman, by ſome accident or other, ſettled in one of thoſe miſerable countries which ſlavery deſolates, and that he had a family of children born to him in that country—if he and his family were, by the ſad and too uſual lot of thoſe regions, trepanned and ſold into ſlavery in a foreign land; ſay, would their maſter (who could neither obtain, nor would deſire any proofs, of their guilt or innocence) acquire a juſt and legal right of property in their bodies by the purchaſe? Does not this caſe place the man without the pale of all law, in a ſituation perfectly ſimilar to that of the ſtate of nature, where a man's own arm muſt avenge his injuries, and vindicate his liberty? Would it not be a ſacred and indiſpenſible duty, to himſelf and his family, whoſe precious rights he is bound to defend, to waſh out the records of their ſlavery in the heart's blood of their tyrant? He is no Engliſhman, or a baſe and intereſted hypocrite, who will deny this.

Although cuſtom, which never ſcruples to ſanction the greateſt wickedneſs, or the vileſt folly, has in theſe reſpects been adduced to eſtabliſh a difference between the Negro and the Engliſhman; the God of Juſtice has made none. The ſacred doctrine of the Rights of Man is equally true upon the ſhores of the Gambia as upon the banks of the Thames. Tyrants read this, and tremble!

I inſiſt there is no ſuch thing as hereditary ſlavery; no man can have been born a Slave. The ſon of a ſlave is

born with the ſame right to freedom, as the ſon of a king. If any man, whoſe judgment is warped by his intereſt, or led aſtray by the faſcinating plea of cuſtom and ſuppoſed utility (which pretences have alſo ſerved to vindicate the neceſſity of political deſpotiſm, of ſelling or killing priſoners of war, of eating human fleſh, of expoſing the aged, of tolerating the practice of ſodomy, of burning heretics, of torturing ſuppoſed criminals to make them confeſs; in fine, of the whole of that black catalogue of infernal inventions, the practice of which has degraded human nature infinitely below the brute creation) ſhould demand my authority for ſuch aſſertions, I ſcorn to refer him to any other than the great book of nature, open to every rational creature, imprinted upon every human underſtanding! The true teſt of the juſtice of either law or cuſtom is, whether or not they may be honeſtly reſiſted? Let this be applied to the caſe of ſlavery all over the world.

But our ſlave traders ſay, the Negro commerce has ever been ſanctioned by government, and that it is legalized by ſeveral acts of parliament—it is falſe. It is not in the power of any government upon earth (leaſt of all the Britiſh) to legalize or juſtify man-ſtealing, or receiving (for the receiver is as bad as the thief) any more than it is one of their rights to authorize pyracy upon the high ſeas, or any other act of rapine or injuſtice, either at home or abroad.

The meaning of the acts has been groſsly miſtaken. All laws muſt be interpreted by the rules of juſtice and common ſenſe. The acts of parliament, which authorize the importation of ſlaves from Africa to our colonies, cannot, in reaſon, or any fairneſs of conſtruction, be ſuppoſed to extend to any other than ſuch as were fairly and legally convicted of crimes; and in all reaſon the *onus probandi* of the guilt lays upon the purchaſer of the ſlave. If he has brought himſelf into a difficult and dangerous predicament, we leave him

him to ſettle that point with his own avarice and indiſcretion.

If a man ſhould tell me, that the African princes and governors have a right, from ancient law and eſtabliſhed uſage, to enſlave men, women, and children, I ſhould anſwer his argument by aſking him the following queſtion. Suppoſing ſuch was the cuſtom of this country (and a ſimilar has formerly prevailed here in ſome degree) ought we in juſtice to ſubmit to it, and continue the practice? Cuſtom can acquit neither the African or the European ſlave-dealer of the charge of rapine and injuſtice.

But as it is ſo venial a crime to ſteal men, it muſt be ſtill more ſo to ſteal horſes. Suppoſing there was a foreign market for coach horſes, where they were to be purchaſed cheap, becauſe they were ſtolen, would you ſend thither to ſupply your equipages? Worthy gentlemen, *honourable men*, I believe you would.

Let us examine the policy and pretended advantages of the African Slave Trade, and of the monopoly of ſugar granted the Weſt India Iſlands. The original attempt to cultivate ſugar upon the American Iſlands, by the labour of ſlaves, purchaſed in a country ſo many thouſand miles diſtant, and tranſported at ſuch an immenſe expence and riſk of every kind, was ſuch an inſtance of knavery in the projectors, and of madneſs and folly in the nations which permitted it, as nothing could equal but its barbarity and wickedneſs.

If the national intereſts, and the rights of humanity, had been at all attended to, it had been found infinitely preferable to have eſtabliſhed ſugar colonies on the coaſt of Africa, where is plenty of land, as fit for that culture as any in the world, where they are not ſo ſubject to thoſe deſtructive hurricanes as in the Weſt Indies, and where might have been found plenty of labourers upon the ſpot. Had ſuch a plan been at firſt carried into execution, and foſtered with

that care and expence which has been beſtowed upon our Weſt India Iſlands (from which the nation has reaped no other benefit than obtaining an article of luxury, at nearly double the price it ought to coſt) great part of the immenſe continent of Africa would moſt probably have been in a ſtate of civilization at this day; and from its vaſt population, which we ſhould have encouraged, and the increaſing wants of which we ſhould have ſupplied, in exchange for the moſt precious commodities, it would have proved to us the moſt valuable foreign connection in the world.

But if it was determined at any rate to rob one country of its inhabitants, in order to people and cultivate another, why not ſtock the country with male and female, and breed ſufficient numbers for your purpoſe? Why adopt the prepoſterous and expenſive cuſtom of digging your lands with the hoe and ſpade, at which work a plow and pair of horſes will in a day do the labour of a hundred Negroes?

It is granted on all hands, that a labourer, born upon the iſlands, is of infinitely more worth than a foreign ſlave. The Negroes are the hardieſt and moſt prolific race in the world, and the climate of the Weſt Indies, ſo congenial with their own native one, that there could be no natural obſtacle to their increaſe to any degree. The ſame may be ſaid of the fitneſs of the Weſt India Iſlands, for the purpoſe of breeding animals for draft, and all kinds of live ſtock. Jamaica, in particular, abounds in cattle and proviſion for them.

The ſugar culture, is analogous to that of beans with us, and ought to be conducted preciſely after the ſame method; that is to ſay, by the different operations of the plow, the horſe-hoe, and the hand-hoe. There is no more reaſon for fallowing the lands in the ſugar colonies, by mere dint of human labour, unaſſiſted by draft cattle, than there is for ſuch a practice with our corn lands in England. In ſuch caſe what a price would our corn amount to?—Had ſuch

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been the cuſtom here, and the labour been performed by ſlaves, and had a body of merchants been the providers of thoſe ſlaves, no doubt but they would have proved the propriety and cheapneſs of the ſaid cuſtom, in a manner equally as clear and irrefragable as the advantage of the Negro Trade is proved by the man-ſtealers of Briſtol and Liverpool.

Wherever the plow has been uſed in the ſugar plantations, the ſucceſs has been eminent, the crops much larger, and the quality of the ſugar ſuperior. The ſame ſucceſs has attended the procreation and rearing of ſlaves in thoſe very few places where it has been attempted, and where they have been treated with humanity. What then can be the meaning that theſe prudent meaſures, ſo conſonant with reaſon and common ſenſe, have never hitherto been adopted; but that the preſent ſyſtem, ſo replete with barbarity and injury to the public intereſt, is to this hour perſiſted in with ſuch obſtinacy and perſeverance?

The reaſon is obvious, to any man who will open his eyes. It is the intereſt of the ſlave dealers, who ſupply the iſlands, to extend their trade, and ſell as many ſlaves as poſſible. Hence ſlaves are uſed for every purpoſe, and I even wonder it has never been the cuſtom in the Weſt Indies to ſaddle and ride them inſtead of horſes and mules. Hence the neglect of draft cattle, and the exhibition of thoſe infamous and inhuman calculations, in which it has been proved to be the planter's intereſt to wear out his Negroes, by the utmoſt extremity of extorted labour in a few years, and then to replace them by new purchaſes, rather than to work them out fairly to old age, by merciful and humane treatment.

There has always exiſted another weighty reaſon for the large and frequent importations of Negroes. The Weſt India planters are uſually in debt to the Engliſh merchants, who by that tie have it in their power to enforce a trade which they find ſo gainful. Not but that the planters themſelves

ſelves are bigotted to the infamous and unprofitable ſyſtem of ſlavery. But if we are to believe a late hiſtorian of Jamaica (who, while he was lamenting in the moſt pathetic ſtrains, his own confinement for a juſt debt, could have the confidence to defend the everlaſting thraldom and ſlavery of the innocent Africans) the Creoles are a race the moſt indolent, barbarous, and ill-informed, in their own concerns, that can be conceived. According to this writer, the huſbandry of the ſugar plantations is left to the care of a parcel of ignorant attornies, agents, or Negro-drivers, whoſe management (right or wrong) is preciſely the ſame as was at firſt adopted, with little or no regard to amelioration or improvement. We know too much of the proverbial obſtinacy and ignorance of our farmers at home, to be led aſtray by the prejudiced opinions of Weſt India Planters. By attending to the progreſs of improvement, we ſhall find that the thing uſually appealed to, and dignified with the name of Experience, is too often nothing more than a habitude of error.

From this view of the matter, which is ſtrictly juſt, it clearly appears to be the intereſt of the Slave-dealers, to render the culture of ſugar as expenſive as poſſible, by the moſt extenſive uſe and conſumption of ſlaves; the plan of ſlavery is beſides in uniſon with the depraved appetites of thoſe baſtard Engliſhmen, the Creoles, and ſubſervient to their convenience. Can we ſuppoſe theſe people will care to what enormous height their wicked and knaviſh prejudices may carry the price of Weſt India produce, as long as the cullibility of the beſotted mother-country continues to pay the piper, by permitting the Weſt India monopoly to exiſt, accompanied with ſuch ſcandalous abuſes? Our infatuated government, long ago impoſed duties, amounting to a prohibition upon the ſugars of all other countries, in favour of their beloved colonies in the Weſt Indies, in order to encourage the moſt enormous wickedneſs that has ever defiled

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the earth, and that the ſubjects might enjoy the high honour of paying one ſhilling per pound for a luxury, which they might juſt as well have obtained (and with innocence too) for ſixpence. And it ſeems we muſt perpetuate this precious ſyſtem, becauſe the emolument of a ſmall but execrable and contemptible knot of dealers in human fleſh, is of more conſequence than the deareſt rights of humanity, and the pecuniary intereſts of the whole people of England conjoined.

In anſwer to all this, we ſhall be referred to a vaſt capital of three or four ſcore millions, employed in the Guinea and Colonial Trade—to the nurſery and encouragement of ſeamen, afforded by the Negro carrying-trade—and to the conſiderable vent of Britiſh manufactures upon the coaſt of Guinea, and in our Weſt India Iſlands. But, on the other hand we muſt inſiſt, this capital has ever been groſsly miſemployed, upon the moſt precarious ſecurity, and to little or no national profit, if we ſet againſt its ſuppoſed gains the extravagant ſurcharge, which, in conſequence of the abſurd and unprofitable plan of the Negro Trade, the nation has ever paid, and ſtill continues to pay, upon the ſtaple of the colonies. This trade has been called a nurſery of ſeamen, inſtead of their grave *, its more proper appellation. That it is a ſeminary of raſcals, there is no doubt. As to the ſale of Britiſh commodities upon the coaſt of Africa, and in our own iſlands, the Slave Trade has been a grand impediment to it in both places. In the former country, becauſe that villainous traffic has diminiſhed its inhabitants, and prevented its civilization, which would have immenſely increaſed its demand for Engliſh goods, and its ability to pay for them. In the latter, becauſe a race of free labourers would always have been greater conſumers than a race of ſlaves.

* See Mr. Wilberforce's account of the mortality on board Slave Ships.

If the treaſures this nation has loſt, within theſe laſt hundred years, by the improvident mode of cultivating ſugar upon the Weſt India Iſlands, and by the neglect of that truly valuable trade, which might have been eſtabliſhed on the coaſt of Africa, in lieu of the Slave Trade, could be calculated, it would amount to a ſum adequate to the liquidation of a conſiderable part of our national debt. But if the numbers of innocents could be counted, who, in that helliſh commerce have been, by fraud or violence, torn from their country and deareſt connections; killed by hardſhips in driving to the coaſt; ſtiffled or tortured to death on ſhip board on the paſſage; ſtarved to death on the ſhore, and highways in the iſlands, becauſe diſeaſed, and no one would purchaſe them; whipped to death under exceſſive labour, and executed by being roaſted over a ſlow fire, or hung alive upon gibbets, for endeavouring to recover their freedom; the recital would cauſe even the devil to change his colour, and be aſhamed of his nature. He would tell us, we had no need to go to an imaginary hell in queſt of devils.

In fine, the profits of our Weſt India commerce may well be called in queſtion by the ableſt political arithmeticians; and, on this head, I think the nation at large may be compared to a general trader, who is not ſufficiently enlightened to keep a regular ſet of books, from which he might be aſſured of the profit or loſs of every particular concern. Thus we are certain, that the national gains, from the aggregate of our agriculture, domeſtic and foreign trade, are immenſe; but we are not altogether ſo certain as to the proportion, or whether any portion at all of theſe gains ariſes from our ſugar colonies.

O! the heart-rending catalogue of miſeries, which this infernal trade of ſlavery has brought upon the innocent and unoffending ſons and daughters of Africa! The tears guſh from my eyes, my blood boils, my ſwelling heart throbs with

with indignation! I dare not truſt my pen with a recapitulation of thoſe horrid barbarities which we have been ſo long perpetrating, and which (if finite crimes can poſſibly merit everlaſting puniſhment) muſt ſurely deſerve the ſevereſt vengeance of hell-fire. I muſt content myſelf with referring the reader to thoſe humane authors *, who have laboured in the cauſe of the poor and oppreſſed, and who were obliged to go through with theſe ſhocking details. Let him turn even to the *humane* Mr. Beckford's account, who defends the Slave Trade, and he will ſee in it crimes enough to damn a nation. Theſe dealers in human fleſh have left no law unbroke, of God or Man!

If many of my countrymen, judging from the tenderneſs and benevolence of their own hearts, ſhould ſay, that the relations of ſuch extreme cruelty are incredible, I anſwer, they ſtand uncontroverted, and are as poſitively true as the exiſtence of the trade itſelf, which may indeed well be doubted by an enlightened poſterity. Alas! we have collateral teſtimony, which is but too incontrovertible. The nature of the trade, and the character of thoſe concerned in it. As to the nature of the trade, I here make a ſolemn appeal to its defenders;—if they can prove there is a poſſibility of carrying it on, without the commiſſion of Murder, Robbery, and extreme Cruelty, I will engage to give up all oppoſition to it; but, if ſuch horrors and wickedneſs muſt be its inevitable concomitants, what conſiderations are there in life which ought to induce us to perſevere in it? Setting aſide all evidence (of which there is abundance, that no one dares contradict) of man-ſtealing in Africa, putting out of the queſtion the known univerſal bad character of the country princes and dealers, ſtill common ſenſe will tell us, that the immenſe number of ſlaves, furniſhed by the country of the Negroes,

* See the excellent Benezet's Book. As to latter accounts, the evidence laid before the Houſe is ſufficient at once to point out to every honeſt man his indiſpenſible duty.

cannot poſſibly conſiſt of all criminals, but that the far greater portion muſt be the innocent and unfortunate.—Are the infants Criminals? Is not this Robbery? or, do you only modeſtly ſtile yourſelf Receivers? * Reflect upon the bloody ſeverities that muſt be uſed, in ſeparating theſe wretches from their deareſt connections, and in driving them, perhaps, many hundred miles to the coaſt—in ſtowing them in the hold of the Slave-ſhip, and ſubjecting them to all the horrors of the Middle Paſſage—in abandoning thoſe (upon whom your mode of tranſporting them, from their own country, has brought incurable diſeaſes) to periſh for mere want, upon the ſhores of your iſlands—in ſelling the able and healthy, to never-ending labour, for which they have no recompence, but are driven to it, like brute beaſts, by the laſh—where they are deprived of the common rights and privileges of nature; and where it is even put out of their power to fulfil the firſt command of God—increaſe and multiply. Is not this Cruelty?

Do not you know before-hand, and even allow for it, in *pro formâ* calculations of profit and loſs, that in every ſlaving adventure, numbers muſt fall a ſacrifice to the neceſſary rigours and cloſe confinement on board the ſhip, and *to the ſeaſoning* or exceſſive labour on the Iſlands? Is not this Murder?

For the character of the Slave-maſters in the Weſt Indies, we need but look to their bloody code of laws, and to their monſtrous and ſavage cuſtoms, to receive a too painful conviction. Can we forget, that formerly a man might kill his ſlave with impunity; and that the moſt exquiſite tortures, that helliſh ingenuity could invent, were permitted, by both

* See Mr. Beckford's book for a curious diſtinction. Alſo, that of another defender of Slavery, who humanely boaſts of the cheerful dances of the Negroes on ſhip-board. This honeſt man tells us, very gravely, that our right to buy the Slaves is certainly as good as that of the African Princes to ſell them.—Agreed.

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law and cuſtom, to be practiſed upon that unfortunate race? Sorry I am to be obliged to add, that thoſe little indulgences, which have of late years been accorded to the hapleſs ſlaves, have been wrung and extorted from their cruel and reluctant maſters, by the unwearied labours of humane and charitable men. But what are we to ſay to the oppoſition made in 1789, to Sir William Dolben's humane bill for the regulation of the number of ſlaves in the Middle Paſſage? For myſelf I muſt ſay, conſidering the enlightened times in which we live; I look upon it to be a meaſure of the moſt infamous, ſordid, and atrocious complexion, that has ever diſgraced the human character from the firſt records of time; and that I would not have concurred in it for the poſſeſſion of all the treaſures which the whole earth and ſea contain. It is well known, that the diabolical avarice of theſe men incited them to ſtow the miſerable captives ſo thick, that there was a conſtant repetition of the dreadful tragedy of the Black Hole of Calcutta, on board their ſhips. The poor wretches, ironed together, were wedged ſo cloſe in this floating hell, as to lay in a perpetual ſtate of acute torment; from which numbers were relieved, by being abſolutely ſtiffled to death. Even ſince the regulations, and although the ſhips are not allowed to carry ſo many ſlaves as formerly, the cruelty of their ſtowage in the hold of the * Slave-ſhip, and the treatment of the women in particular (of which I have lately received a ſhocking and but too well authenticated an account) is deplorable, inſufferable, in ſhort, high treaſon againſt humanity. They are heavy ironed, in couples, and ſtowed as it is ſtiled *ſpoon-ways*, laying in ſo painful a poſture, and in ſuch an intenſe heat, that their

* See Trotter on the Scurvy, publiſhed laſt year by Longman. Mr. Trotter was ſurgeon of a Slave-ſhip; his deſcription of it (ſince the regulations for the Middle Paſſage) deſerves the greateſt attention of all thoſe who wiſh to ſerve the cauſe of humanity. Alſo Mr. Wilberforce's ſpeech, April 2, 1792.

feelings muſt be conſtantly upon the rack; and with ſo little room for reſpiration, that it is no uncommon thing for them to periſh by actual ſuffocation.

Great God! that Engliſhmen could have the hardneſs of heart, or the aſſurance to come forward, and demand the continuance of ſuch enormities, upon the plea of intereſt!

After a juſt conception of the nature of the trade, and of the characters of thoſe who have conducted it, is it poſſible for a man in his ſenſes any longer to doubt the exiſtence of thoſe barbarities which have been alledged againſt it? In fact they are interwoven in its very nature. All proof of particular facts is ſuperfluous.

The defence ſet up by the dealers in Slaves is, in every particular, the moſt indecent and groſs inſult upon common ſenſe, that was ever offered by intereſted and barefaced villainy. It is a tenfold aggravation of their guilt. To deſcend to particulars.—Unleſs you continue this trade (ſay they) ſo many millions will be loſt. The blackeſt crimes then loſe their nature, and become virtues, when gain is the object. But we have the ſanction of cuſtom and preſcription—ſo have your brethren of Algiers;—ſo has the Inquiſition.

We purchaſe priſoners of war in Africa, who, but for our humane trade, would be murdered; and we bring them to a ſtate of happineſs and civilization.—You neither know, or care, what deſcription of perſons you purchaſe.—You too often ſteal, as well as purchaſe; of which hundreds of inſtances are upon record. We are too well convinced the far greater part of the wars which happen in Guinea, are fomented and carried on expreſsly for the purpoſe of obtaining priſoners for ſale. Becauſe the barbarous and uncivilized inhabitants of Africa, have a cuſtom of ſelling their priſoners of war, does that exculpate you? It is the cuſtom in many parts of the world, to kill priſoners of war; and Heaven knows, it is infinitely better for the wretches to have their throats cut

fairly

fairly at once, than to fall into your cruel hands, where ſuch multitudes of them have died by inches.

The ſtate of Slavery in their own country, is that of Paradiſe, compared with Weſt India Slavery; which we know, by the numbers annually murdered in it for ſo many years paſt, to be the moſt cruel and ſevere that ever depopulated the earth. The extraordinary rigours exerciſed towards Slaves in Africa, extends only towards ſuch as are intended for ſale, and for thoſe cruelties you are accountable. Your ſtate of happineſs and civilization we underſtand—the comforts of the Middle Paſſage, and then, if they eſcape with life, the wearing out your poor befriended fellow-creatures with exceſſive labour in a few years! Leave off your abominable traffic, and it will not be worth while of the country princes to take priſoners merely to murder them. The few deſtroyed in cold blood, in their accidental and leſs frequent wars, will not then amount to a fiftieth part of what you more mercileſs than they now ſacrifice every year. Do you take all mankind to be fools, or rather knaves in the groſs, that may be drawn in as confederates?

You plead the comfort and happineſs of your Slaves, that their condition is at leaſt as good, and their labour as eaſy as that of the lower claſſes in England. And is then liberty ſimply conſidered of no conſequence or value to a rational creature? for ſhame! Can you compare the condition of a wretch, who has neither right nor remedy, who is ſold and driven by the laſh like a beaſt, who poſſeſſes not one ſingle comfort or enjoyment of life, but at the will and pleaſure of a Tyrant, with that of a free Engliſh labourer! Both you and the Engliſh labourer know better. You have been obliged to uſe your Slaves more mildly of late; but we know their labour is ſtill dreadful and exceſſive. And pray, what meaſures can there ever be, but that of your mere will, caprice, or ſenſe of intereſt? Can we truſt the humanity of

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thoſe who have deliberately calculated the moſt advantageous period, at which to work a human creature to death? Or of thoſe whoſe intereſt it is to import as many ſlaves as poſſible? If you plead not guilty to this charge, by what means have you ſacrificed ſuch myriads? and why do you even now ſtand in need of ſuch numerous annual recruits? Your compariſon with the Engliſh poor, is unfortunate every way; we do not wear out our labourers as you do your Negroes. And yet Negroes, in their own country, are as long lived as our peaſantry, and would be equally ſo in the Weſt India Iſlands, did not your miraculous philanthropy prevent it.

Too long have we been the dupes of this flagitious and diſadvantageous buſineſs. Wretched Engliſhmen! to be guilty of deeds of ſupererrogation in wickedneſs! to permit, or connive at the blackeſt crimes, even when they are in the higheſt degree injurious to your worldly intereſts! But, alas! with the bulk of mankind, cuſtom has ever been too hard for the moral ſenſe, or even the ſenſe of intereſt. The miſts of ignorance and prejudice are at length happily diſpelled. The moſt able and enlightened of our great men have taken up the cauſe of humanity, and have pointed out to us our true national intereſt, as well as our duty. It is now clearly evident, that the Public has all along been made a property of, by a confederacy of monopoliſts; whoſe private intereſts have been ſupported at the expence of the national character, and the national purſe;—that the Slave Trade, without which they impudently pretend there is no ſugar to be obtained, has really ever been, and ſtill is, the true and only cauſe of the high price and frequent ſcarcity of ſugars; and that the pretended balance, accruing to the nation from this trade, is no where to be found but in their pockets.

Countrymen, what do you underſtand by monopoly? In the vocabulary of my mind, it means *robbing the Public for the emolument of individuals.* The Weſt India has been a groſs

groſs one. They cultivate ſugar after the moſt expenſive poſſible method, and we muſt ſubmit to whatever price they chuſe to impoſe upon it. Duties *intended* to amount to a prohibition, being laid upon the ſugars of all other countries; yet, notwithſtanding the vaſt additional duty, we have a ſupply of Eaſt India ſugar;—was the duty only equal, that ſugar would be at a reaſonable price. Equalize the duty upon all ſugars, the growth of any colony belonging to the Britiſh Crown, and the point would be ſettled at once. The Slave Trade would be at an end. The Weſt Indians muſt, in that caſe, adopt a more frugal mode of huſbandry, or they might keep their ſugars at home to ſweeten their own punch. At any rate, if they expect we ſhould continue to give them a preference, it behoves them to endeavour to deſerve it, both by œconomy and probity. It is rather too bold, to demand of us, not only to laviſh away our money, but even to damn our ſouls, to pleaſe them!

The whole hiſtory of mankind does not afford us a more ſtriking inſtance of human depravity, or better exemplify the maxim, That avarice is the root of all evil, than the oppoſition made to Mr. Wilberforce's bill in the year 1792. Never was the univerſal ſenſe, of all ranks and degrees of a people, more clearly expreſſed, than were the wiſhes or rather demands of the people of England at that period, for the inſtant abolition of the Slave Trade. But even the cleareſt dictates of juſtice; the cries of blood; the tears of humanity; the public intereſt, although ſupported by the popular voice, and the credit of the Miniſter, muſt all give place to the imperious influence of a combination of opulent traders. They, who doubt the efficacy of virtual repreſentation, would do well to reflect ſeriouſly on this caſe, in which the ſuppoſed intereſt of the Weſt Indies was ſo well ſupported in parliament; they, who can ſee no perfection but in a Republican form of government, may alſo learn hence, that

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a popular aſſembly is not always a certain reſource for a redreſs of grievances. Whatever has been whiſpered to the contrary, I ſee no reaſon to doubt the ſincerity of the King's Miniſters; and I have too high an opinion of the humanity and good ſenſe of the Right Hon. Gentleman who propoſed the four * years licence, for robbery and murder, to ſuppoſe any otherwiſe, than that he was abſolutely forced into ſo ſtrange a meaſure; and that he adopted it merely to gain time, that the cauſe might not be totally loſt, and the abolitioniſts diſcouraged. It will ſurely excite the wonder of after ages, to read that ſuch an auguſt and honourable body, as the Parliament of England, ſat gravely debating upon the propriety of tolerating crimes, at which human nature ſhudders, for intereſt ſake; it will give them no very exalted idea of our juſtice or morality, to obſerve, that they who recommended a gradual abolition of the Slave Trade, in the ſame breath aſſented to its inhumanity and injuſtice.

I ſhall not give myſelf a moment's trouble to enquire what may probably be the fate of the preſent bill. But, as a free-born Engliſhman, and as a member of the legiſlature, I ſhall declare my opinion, without reſerve, that we have no right to ſanction robbery, or the forcibly taking away the inhabitants of any country, for the purpoſe of enſlaving them, unleſs they are legally convicted of crime; and that any ſuch Aliens, under oppreſſion in our colonies, have a clear right of appeal to our Tribunals; and that it ought immediately to become matter of ſerious conſideration with all, to whom juſtice and the Britiſh character are dear, how

* A gentleman of worth and conſequence, is now buſied in collecting accounts of particular acts of cruelty and miſery brought upon the poor Africans, on the Coaſt, in the Paſſage, and on the Iſlands. He means to continue it for four years, from the memorable April 2, 1792; and in the end to publiſh the accounts, properly authenticated, in a book, dedicated to thoſe gentlemen who have defended the Slave Trade.

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and in what manner the oppreſſed, are capable of being inſtructed to put in their claim to ſuch right.

This conſideration extends to that immenſe multitude of Africans, who are at preſent *de facto* ſlaves in our colonies; *but of right* are Aliens under the 32d of Henry VIII. and bound by all the laws and ſtatutes of the realm, and of courſe intitled to reciprocal protection. It is in vain to urge the different acts of parliament in favour of the Slave Trade. If an act of parliament was made to authorize the importation of goods from a certain country, could ſuch act poſſibly be ſuppoſed to extend to ſtolen goods? The Engliſh parliament cannot poſſibly confer a right it does not, and cannot, poſſeſs. And if any man, or body of men, have deceived themſelves, or the government of their country, it is highly juſt and reaſonable that themſelves ſhould ſuffer the conſequences. Let thoſe beware, who aſſert, there exiſts a right in the Engliſh government to authorize ſlavery; it is at once to tear up the foundations of the Britiſh conſtitution, and a ſubject of moſt ſerious alarm to the lower claſſes of this country.

But to ſtile the body of men in queſtion a property (a phraſe which is ſtill continued, notwithſtanding ſuch an idea is in direct oppoſition to both the ſpirit and letter of the Britiſh conſtitution, and after the general voice of the nation has declared the Slave Trade to be unjuſt in its nature, and totally indefenſible) is a ſtrange abuſe of terms. I will not aſſent to any ſuch idea. On the contrary, I will maintain, before any Tribunal in theſe kingdoms, that all and every of the inhabitants of the King's dominions, of whatever deſcription (unconvicted of offence againſt the laws) have an undoubted right to freedom; and if this can be controverted, I ſee not what ſecurity I have for my own.

The nation is involved in a predicament which muſt agonize every feeling mind. We have ſinned beyond the

power of juſt retribution, or adequate atonement. All that can poſſibly be done for the miſerable victims of our rapine and tyranny, has already been deviſed and recommended to the legiſlature by thoſe illuſtrious patriots and defenders of the oppreſſed, Wilberforce and Pitt. *Inſtant* abolition of the Slave Trade, and *a gradual* emancipation of the Negroes, ought to be re-demanded by the people; and if it ſhould be again refuſed, and if they, who in violation of both law and juſtice, and the general intereſts of the nation, hold ſuch an immenſe body of the King's liege ſubjects in bondage, ſhould ſtill perſiſt in their infamy, ſuch ſtrong and effectual, at the ſame time legal meaſures, as will in that caſe readily occur to thoſe who are well ſkilled in the Britiſh conſtitution, ſhould be forthwith adopted and carried into execution.

I muſt not omit to remind thoſe worthy patriots, who are engaged in this cauſe, ſo intereſting to humanity, that the uſe of tortures, and cruel executions, if diſcontinued, is not (that I have heard) aboliſhed by law in the colonies. Can we, conſiſtently with our character as Britons, connive at ſuch helliſh infamy, or permit even a poſſibility of the return of ſuch enormities? Nothing can be of more conſequence to humanity, and indeed the ſafety of the Coloniſts, than an immediate law for the prevention of this groſs evil. In the preſent ſtate of things, a cruel execution (merciful Heaven!) ſuch as the roaſting a poor miſerable wretch alive, by ſlow degrees; or expoſing him alive upon a gibbet, to ſtarve to death, with a loaf of bread placed near his mouth, might, and *ought to be*, the ſignal of general Revolt, Vengeance, and Retaliation!

Engliſhmen, Chriſtians, Philoſophers! by whatever appellation ye love beſt to be diſtinguiſhed, I beſeech and charge you, in the name of the moſt High God, in the name of Mercy and Humanity, in the behalf of your national intereſts, and by your ſacred regard for freedom, once more

arouſe

arouſe yourſelves, and put an end to this flagrant wickedneſs, which has ſo long ſtained your national character, and preyed upon your national wealth. Do not forget how the ſum of human miſery has increaſed, from your protracted deliberations. Look upon your own children, and deareſt connections, lay your hands upon your hearts, and then reflect upon the deeds of horror you authorize in Africa. Alas! theſe direful reflections may intrude themſelves into the breaſts of ſome among you, when they may wiſh them abſent; at a time when all worldly conſiderations ſhall have loſt their weight.

The matter is now ſo well underſtood, and all its mazes of infamy and iniquity ſo clearly developped and expoſed, that we can have no poſſible excuſe for indifference or acquieſcence. There is not, in the whole range of mathematical ſcience, a truth more capable of demonſtration, *than that an Engliſhman cannot be at the ſame time the owner of a Slave, and an honeſt man.* But ſuch is the depravity of the human heart, ſo powerful is the *auri ſacri fames*, that men will ſtill contend for the right of trading in their brother's blood; and, were it poſſible, to open a trade with the devil for ſouls, men might be found even in this country who would embark in it for the ſake of lucre.

My Countrymen! ſuffer not yourſelves to be duped by the ſhallow pretences of wicked and intereſted men; nor by your own criminal and unthrifty indolence! Never forget, that it is to theſe monopolizers we owe the ſcarcity and dearneſs of ſugars, which can only be remedied, and that neceſſary of life be rendered plentiful and cheap, by diſſolving their felonious combination. When the poor man pays ten-pence at the ſhop for his pound of ſugar; let him ſay to himſelf, I am thus defrauded of five-pence, and at the ſame time my character as an Engliſhman degraded, by the ever accurſed Slave Trade. Let him then go to his ſuperior, who has in ſome mode an influence in

the government of his country, and make his complaint. If it be urged, that many who are the moſt ſtrenuous advocates for the abolition, are enemies to the Church and Monarchy; I grant it. But are the majority of the petitioners of 1792—the Univerſities, the Bench of Biſhops, Wilberforce, Pitt, Thornton, and Montague, in that predicament? The old ridiculous and lying apology for ſlavery, to wit, that the priſoners in Africa would be murdered, if we did not purchaſe them, which has been ſo repeatedly ſhamed and confuted, is impudently brought forward again. If then an innocent man is condemned to die, do we act a juſt or generous part to purchaſe his life for the ſake of wearing it out in ſlavery, inſtead of preſenting him with freedom, according to the duties of charity and humanity? Foreign nations too, we are told, will continue the Slave Trade, if we are ſuch fools as to abandon the profits of it. As who ſhould ſay—there is a rich man going over Hounſlow-Heath this night; in all human probability he will be robbed by ſomebody; why ſhould we loſe ſuch an opportunity of advantage. Right and wrong, it ſeems, are to be determined by no other rules than thoſe of cuſtom and example. We hear a great deal about the comfort and happineſs * of the ſlaves in our plantations; and many people are ſo indolent, or callous, as to ſatisfy their minds with ſuch a miſerable and ungenerous ſubterfuge. We know well ſome of the ſlaves in all countries, priſoners for life, and perſons under unfortunate circumſtances, may bear their cruel lot with an apparent cheerfulneſs; but what dreadful miſeries muſt await the greater part of them. Is it nothing for a reaſonable creature to be deprived of all power of

* They tell us too of *the property* of the Negroes. Some years ago, an induſtrious Slave on one of the Iſlands, became the owner of a boat. The Governor of the Iſland (who, it gratifies me to relate, died a priſoner in the King's Bench) wanting a boat, took away that of the poor Negro. All the redreſs the Slave was able to obtain from his maſter, to whom he complained, was—What buſineſs had a Slave with property.

volition;

volition; to be robbed of the labour of his whole life, of all the comfort of the ſocial union with the other ſex; to be driven to labour by the laſh, under the moſt barbarous and brutal of the human race; and, after exhauſted nature ſhall be no longer capable of the drudgery of the taſk-maſter, to be turned adrift (if it ſo pleaſe the proprietor) to periſh for want, or to obtain a miſerable and precarious ſubſiſtence from the charity of other Slaves. Behold, indignant reader, the humane Beckford's *Independence of Slavery!* Do not tell me, that merciful Slave-owners treat their Negroes more humanely. To what purpoſe is ſuch a remark? The objections to ſlavery ariſe out of the very nature of the caſe, and need no other proof than the mere attention of common ſenſe. Are there no cruelties uſed by our carmen or hackney-men to their horſes? A moment's reflection will convince us, that the poor Negroes muſt be for ever liable to even worſe abuſe. In this moſt glorious of all countries, even brute beaſts have rights; and a man mal-treating a dumb animal, is amenable to the Magiſtrate.—The wretched ſlave, has no right, no remedy, no appeal!

The idea that the Negro Slaves are univerſally a brutiſh and ſtupid race, who having never taſted freedom, are incapable of being benefited by it, is an intereſted falſehood, totally unfounded in truth or juſtice. Common ſenſe will alſo inſtantly decide on this queſtion. Can we ſuppoſe, that out of the immenſe number of ſlaves exported from Guinea, the bulk of whom, indeed, are priſoners of war, there are no freemen? Yes, indeed, there are but too many unfortunates of that deſcription, both male and female; ſuch as have been torn from the poſſeſſion of property, rank, and eſtimation in their own country; men more highly born than the maſters they are doomed to ſerve;—even the ſons * of Kings! But, granting they were ever ſo ignorant and ſimple,

* Vide Mr. Thornton's Speech, April 2, 1792.

can

can that conſideration authorize you to rob them of their liberty and their labour?

Oh! Engliſhmen, you who profeſs that the price of liberty is ineſtimable! you, who boaſt of the fineſt feelings of humanity! an helpleſs and oppreſſed nation, their bodies ſtreaming with blood, their hands and eyes uplifted to Heaven, accuſes you of rapine and murder! The blood of millions of innocents, which you have ſuffered to be ſhed, calls aloud to Heaven for vengeance! and do you turn away your eyes and ears indifferent, deaf to the calls of nature, of reaſon and of humanity! Does not ſuch a heavy charge as this merit an examination? Do not the oppreſſed and innocent deſerve redreſs? Dare you enter into the temple, and affront the Majeſty of God, even in his own houſe, by hypocritically aſking for mercy, which you ſhew not to your fellows? Is it by way of a mockery of your religion, that you profeſs to *do as you would be done unto, to do no murder, not to covet nor deſire other mens goods?*

Clergy, of our venerable mother, the church, you, to whom the ſacred charge of the morals of the people is committed, and who are ſo amply and ſo juſtly remunerated for your labours, how long will you quietly ſuffer this foul blemiſh in the national character to ſubſiſt? In this caſe, ſurely, it will be no diſgrace to you to imitate the meritorious conduct of your diſſenting brethren. Inſtead of vainly expending your precious time in wrangling diſputations upon abſtruſe ſubjects; which, from their being above the reach of human reaſon, evidently cannot be its concern; or in trifling ones, which can be of no poſſible conſequence, or utility, howſoever determined; let the thunders of your united eloquence pierce the ears and hearts of the people; by your zeal and your example, compel them to the moſt animated ſenſe of juſtice and humanity. This is peculiarly your province, exert your moſt powerful influence, from one end of the kingdom to the other;

other; unite it in one general aſſociation, and cruſh at once this barbarous evil, which is at the ſame time the diſgrace of our religion and humanity, and the bane of our temporal intereſts!

Britons! although you profeſs, feel, and acknowledge the truth of the principle; you have, with all the infatuation of wickedneſs, placed an immenſe multitude in that awful and tremendous ſituation, in which inſurrection, tyrannicide, and retaliation, are ſacred duties! Do you vainly imagine, that the new light, which has ſo lately deſcended from on high, to illumine and enlarge the human mind, and to ſoften the rigour of human woes, will never ſhine upon the oppreſſed African? Vain and ridiculous expectation. Even before any change had happened in the temper of the times, reflect for a moment, by how dreadfully precarious a tenure you maintained your poſſeſſions on the iſland of Jamaica; where 250,000 men, able to bear arms, were held in a ſtate of the moſt cruel bondage, by a handful of tyrants, who, in a caſe of the utmoſt extremity, could not muſter 10,000. But is not the danger now increaſed a thouſand-fold; ſince the rage for liberty is become endemial in the world, and may be ſo eaſily communicated to our iſlands from St. Domingo; and ſince we have certain intelligence, that the French * are determined, at whatever riſk, to ſpread the knowledge of the Rights of Man among our Negroes?

Infatuated coloniſts! they are like men, placed immediately over a mine, to which accident or deſign may give fire,

* Towards the cloſe of the year, I was informed by an American gentleman, that there had lately been ſeveral conſultations at Paris relative to the ſlaves in the Weſt Indies; that it was propoſed to emancipate the whole body of them, and that it was the ſubject of enquiry what would be the propereſt mode of tampering with the Negroes of the Engliſh Iſlands. Some one propoſed to employ a famous Negro Captain of Senegal, mentioned in one of their books of voyages. I muſt own I have my doubts reſpecting their good intentions towards the

fire, and blow them in an inſtant into eternity. Yet, with a moſt ſottiſh ſtupidity, they ſeem totally inſenſible of the dreadful perils which environ them. Let us ſave theſe men, in ſpite of themſelves. Let us convince them too, that juſtice is the beſt policy. Would not a general revolt among the ſlaves be the moſt fatal event, and the moſt to be dreaded, of any that could happen in the Weſt Indies? And ought not the moſt prudent and rational meaſures to be adopted to counteract the probability of ſo direful a cataſtrophe? For my part, I think I ſee it in the cleareſt light, that no riſk can poſſibly be ſo great, no danger ſo menacing (conſidering times and circumſtances) as that of obſtinately perſiſting to retain a vaſt body of men in ſlavery, who need do nothing more than will it, to regain their natural rights. Surely the ſooner the Negroes are reclaimed from the lawleſs ſtate of ſlavery, and introduced within the pale of civil ſociety (to which indeed, by virtue of the *Lex Talionis*, their right is paramount to that of their maſters) the more ſafe, the more advantageous it will be for the colonies. And I ſubmit it to thoſe, who have an eye to their gradual emancipation, whether the moſt proper preliminary to that deſirable end would not be for every ſlave to be forthwith indentured to his maſter for a certain number of years; the length of the term to be regulated by circumſtances, in ſuch wiſe that no ſlave ſhould be bound for a ſhorter period than nine years, reckoning from his firſt arrival in the Weſt Indies. A juſt

the poor Africans, or they would have devoted a part of that time to their relief, which they have ſpent in theoretic fooleries. But, if ever they ſhould be taken with a fit of juſtice, and emancipate the ſlaves, and we ſhould delay following their example (under proper reſtrictions) we ſhall well deſerve the calamities which muſt aſſuredly enſue. The ſame gentleman farther informed me, that the Society *De propaganda* had diſpatched emiſſaries into New Spain, about the time of the death of the King; and that they impatiently expected intelligence from thence, to determine upon ſome operations of conſequence in that quarter.

and

and equitable code of laws to be immediately formed for the government of the Black Poor.

I foreſee, in an inſtant, the objections which will be made to a benevolent plan like this, and the ſovereign contempt with which it will be treated; but I am neither to be convinced without ſolid reaſons, nor intimidated with overbearing language.

If you have been able to coerce and govern theſe men in a ſtate of barbarous ſlavery, there can be no doubt of your ability ſo to do in their approach towards civilization, after you ſhall have imparted to them freedom, and a new intereſt in their lives and actions: in ſhort, after you have granted them all they can poſſibly expect, who know they muſt labour for their bread, and who have been accuſtomed to do it. The trouble and derangement which would at firſt enſue, from a ſcheme like this, is to be ſure ſufficiently apparent; but how much are ſuch difficulties overbalanced by the juſtice of it, and by its obvious future advantages. Indeed what trouble or ſolicitude of ours can poſſibly make atonement to thoſe innocent creatures, whom we have ſo cruelly injured and oppreſſed!

If the Weſt India Planters could lay aſide their prejudices, and ſee their true intereſts, they would find them involved in relinquiſhing the ſyſtem of ſlavery, and that as ſpeedily as poſſible. The bubble is burſt, the cheat is diſcovered. Theſe kingdoms will no longer ſubmit to the price of ſugars, cultivated in the old expenſive mode; for the exceſs of which, upon our enormous conſumption, neither the pretended profits of the Slave Trade, nor the excluſive trade of our Weſt India Iſlands, have ever formed any thing like an equivalent.

A competition in the ſugar culture, which ignorance and corrupt influence have hitherto prevented, can be ſtaved off but a very little while longer. The coaſt of Africa, and

our poſſeſſions in the Eaſt Indies, muſt not be unjuſtly deprived of this beneficial branch of commerce; leaſt of all the former, which, by its vaſt extent and infinite populouſneſs, is ſo well calculated to recompence our juſtice, with a *real* inſtead of a *Weſt India*; in other words, a *deluſive* balance in our favour.

Inſtead of aiming at the impoſſible attempt of continuing old deceptions, and thoſe too beſet with dangers, at which every prudent man muſt tremble, let our Weſt India Coloniſts immediately commence the laudable plan of reforming their preſent ridiculous and extravagant ſyſtem of huſbandry, that they may be thereby enabled to make a reſpectable figure in the approaching competition, and to afford their ſtaple commodity, at leaſt as cheap, as any other part of the world. In order to effect this, the indiſpenſible requiſites are, to put as ſpeedy an end as poſſible to ſlavery; and to avail themſelves of the more ſpirited and cheaper voluntary labours of freemen; and to introduce the plough, and the horſe-hoe, in the ſame manner and degree as is the practice in the corn culture of England. That the analogy of culture is perfectly juſt, I am aſſured by intelligent perſons, who have ſpent many years both in Jamaica and Barbadoes. If lands are ſo ſituated, as not to admit the plough, they muſt no longer be applied to the cultivation of ſugar. In the place of importing more Negroes, deſtined perhaps to cut their throats, or at leaſt to eat up their profits, let them bend their utmoſt attention to civilize and promote the breed of thoſe they already poſſeſs; thereby ſecuring to their country a race of hardy labourers, the children of the ſoil, and intereſted in its proſperity. There is, however, an importation of ſlaves, of a certain deſcription, which I beg leave warmly to recommend to our brethren the Weſt India Planters; I mean Suffolk cart-mares, *in foal*, for the purpoſe of rearing a breed of proper plow-horſes in the iſlands;

and

and of plow-men, from the ſame country, to inſtruct the Negroes how to drive them.

From ſuch laudable and œconomical methods as the foregoing in the Planters, and from the advantage of ancient eſtabliſhment, the Weſt India Iſlands may ſtill retain their pre-eminence in the ſugar trade. Without ſuch a reformation, they will moſt aſſuredly and moſt deſervedly loſe it. And after all, will they not be benefited, as well as the Mother-country, by the change of ſyſtem? The moſt ſtriking advantage of the new plan will be, that they will be infinitely more ſafe amongſt a race of free labourers, than amidſt ſuch myriads of oppreſſed and diſcontented ſlaves; and that their eſtates will therefrom acquire an additional worth; and they may look forward, with more comfortable reflections, on the ſecurity and happineſs of their poſterity. It will ſurely be no inconſiderable improvement of their condition (I ſpeak of mere Planters, unconnected with the African Trade) to be able to manage their concerns with ſo much leſs capital than before; to be free from the neceſſity of holding ſuch a precarious property as that of ſlaves; and from the conſtant irkſome dependance upon thoſe Slave Merchants by whom they are ſupplied. Theſe laſt appear to have a ſeparate intereſt, both from the great body of the conſumers of Weſt India produce, and the cultivators of it. The projected reform, of adopting the cheaper and more effectual labour of draught cattle, will leave a ſurplus of hands adequate to the moſt extenſive improvements in the iſlands; and, under the foſtering care and protection of our Government, there can exiſt no doubt but that the abolition of the Slave Trade, inſtead of ruining them (according to the predictions of intereſted men) will contribute to their attainment of the higheſt degree of proſperity.

After the extinction of the Negro Trade, the capital

which it now inveſts, will be moſt probably ſtill employed on the coaſt of Africa, but in a manner infinitely more advantageous to Britain. That immenſe country, ſo abounding with people accuſtomed to European luxuries, and with the means of paying for them in the natural riches of their ſoil, preſents to us, at this inſtant, the moſt important object in the whole circle of foreign commerce. Could we once annihilate the barbarous and unfruitful Slave Trade upon that coaſt, and eſtabliſh a free intercourſe among the natives; their rich and extenſive inland countries would, in proceſs of time, ſend forth a demand nearly ſufficient to employ all the trading induſtry of Great Britain. How it has happened that ſuch a fruitful mine of wealth has been overlooked ſo long, is hard to conceive. Far enough from thinking that the project of aboliſhing the Slave Trade intirely upon the coaſt of Guinea, is impracticable or viſionary, I am decidedly of opinion, that its completion is in the compaſs of our power, and that in no very long period of time. The times are ripe; ſuch a conſummation approaches. Our power, in that country, is ſuperior to that of any other European nation; and it would be a noble act of atonement in us, who have been the greateſt ſinners, to heal the wounds of bleeding Africa, and to impart to her oppreſſed ſons the ineſtimable bleſſings of freedom, and of honourable and equal commerce.

It is ſubmitted to thoſe who poſſeſs local knowledge, whether the moſt proper means to attain this deſirable end, would not be to form an alliance with ſome powerful Chieftain or King, grounded upon the principle of aboliſhing the old inhuman traffic, and of encouraging liberty and induſtry among the people. The labour and expence of ſuch an undertaking would be amply repaid by the juſtice and honour of the motives, and by the vaſt commercial advantages which would undoubtedly enſue. In proceſs of time,

caravans,

caravans, * from every quarter of Africa, would pour thei riches into our warehouſes on the coaſt; Engliſh manufactures would be in the higheſt requeſt throughout thoſe wide extended countries, and the Engliſh name known, honoured, and revered from Senegal to Egypt.

And for what purpoſe, fellow-citizens, are we to forego the proſpect of that acceſſion of honour, and thoſe brilliant advantages, preſented to us by the abolition of the Slave Trade? Why, to adminiſter to the private intereſt of a few thouſand men, whoſe opulence is the price of blood; who modeſtly come forward to demand the privilege of tyrannizing over a million of their ſpecies, in every poſſible reſpect as much intitled to freedom, and the fair chances of exiſtence, as themſelves. Father of mercies! Are we to ſuffer whole nations to be carried into captivity, to feed with their raviſhed labour, and their blood, the luxuries of a few unworthy individuals, whoſe unjuſt and tyrannical principles diſgrace the community to which they belong? Muſt better men than themſelves be trodden to the duſt, and muſt the whole kingdom too continue to be heavily taxed, in one of the prime neceſſaries of life, that they may parade in their coaches? Forbid it juſtice and humanity—forbid it policy! If nothing can ſupport their luxuries, but the ſufferings of the innocent—Down with their coaches! Away with their equipages to Tatterſal's. I would rather behold them begging their bread in the ſtreets, than the miſerable Africans, bending and bleeding under their accurſed whips! They talk of compaſſion, and they beſpeak it for themſelves; but what compaſſion do they ſhew to the innocent man in ſlavery? Surely our

* Of late years a communication by caravans has been opened between the Portugueze ſettlements, on the Eaſtern coaſt of Africa and Angola. Dan. Defoe, in one of his books, recommends, as the beſt mode of exploring the interior of Africa, to ſend a caravan from Egypt, well laden with goods proper for trade, and well armed, with at leaſt 20 Engliſhmen, accuſtomed to hot climates, profeſſional men, &c. under an able and experienced leader.

compaſſion and aſſiſtance too muſt be due to the oppreſſed, not the oppreſſors. Methinks I hear ſome nice and faſtidious cenſurer, complain of the harſhneſs of my language; too rough, perhaps, for the affected and habitual ſcrew of his mouth, or too honeſt to accord with the barbarous ſimper of his countenance. I ſay to ſuch a man, before he proceeds to condemn my warmth; let him deſcribe in what terms he would ſpeak of the thief, or the receiver, who had robbed him of his wife, of his favourite child, or of his own liberty. Is it a time for ſoft ſpeeches, after a ſeven years conviction of the incorrigibility of the delinquents? Much uſe hath been made of that abominable term, Negro Property, and of the vaſt ideal conſequences it holds in the article of the Weſt India mortgages. But ſurely nothing, deſerving the name of a ſecurity, can poſſibly be ſo precarious as that upon an uſurped and fictitious property in Slaves; and they, ſo infinitely more numerous than their maſters, that in caſe of a general revolt, it would be alike impoſſible either to ſubdue them, or to prevent the deſtruction of all other property. Reſtore to theſe men their rights (of which they have been fraudulently deprived) and you will, as far as is now in your power, take away the ground of diſcontent. By ſuch a juſt and neceſſary act, inſtead of depreciating, you will make a real addition to the ſecurity of the mortgagee. By ſowing the ſeeds of a numerous population, and by adopting rational agricultural improvements, you will infinitely enhance the value of the colonies, both to the mother country and yourſelves.

It is a wonderful contemplation, to ſet down and reflect what an uncontroulable tyranny cuſtom has erected, and firmly eſtabliſhed, over the minds of men! It ſeems always to have been able to benumb and ſilence the reaſoning faculties. Who is there among thoſe ſons of humanity, that are now ſo ſtrenuouſly contending for the abolition of the

Slave

Slave Trade, but will think it ſtrange that ſo many years of his life ſhould paſs away before he entertained a ſingle reflection upon its wickedneſs and unlawfulneſs? Should a man, even now, be deſirous of giving his ſentiments upon the ſubject; ſome * people would aſk him, with much gra-

* There are a number of people in the world who cannot bear the fatigue of inveſtigation, and who of courſe lay hold of the firſt ſhadow of a reaſon which preſents itſelf. They are incapable of making improvements themſelves, and their pride renders them adverſe to thoſe propoſed by others. The grand argument of theſe men is, "There can be no doubt but the Planters would have aboliſhed Slavery long ſince, if they could have done without it, becauſe all men will act according to their intereſt." But if men can always ſee their true intereſt, how happens it that improvements are ſo long in making their way in the world? Were not the Scots almoſt forced into the Union, the moſt unpopular, at the ſame time the moſt beneficial, meaſure ever carried in that country? Was not the loſs of North America to have ruined us, when perhaps the only ſolid benefit we ever derived from that country was, that it ridded us of a number of diſcontented and vagabond politicians? Have not people been known to oppoſe, with all their might, the erection of a turnpike, which afterwards doubled the value of the adjacent grounds, and from which they themſelves reaped the firſt and greateſt benefit? How many Engliſh farmers have formerly obſtinately perſiſted in refuſing to hoe their turnips, although they ſaw, perhaps, upon the next farm, that the conſequence was nearly a double crop; giving the admirable reaſon for their rejecting the hoe, "that it might do for gentlemen, but would never do for them." In ſhort, has common ſenſe any thing to do in ſhoeing a carman's horſe? or, are thoſe globular maſſes, called ſhoes, intended merely to ſhew how long the animal's foot can reſiſt even iron; how well he can ſtand upon the moſt ſlippery ſurface that can be contrived, without falling or laming himſelf; and how well his maſter can afford to riſk the loſs of him, and to throw away a great part of his labour, in uſeleſs exertions, upon a ſurface like ice? When the late profeſſor St. Bel (a man of infinite merit; but what doubly enchanced his worth to this country, the beſt judge of ſhoeing that ever came into it) in my hearing, explained his method to an owner of cart-horſes, and his blackſmith; thoſe gentlemen, with a ſmile of contempt, anſwered him, that it might do very well in France, but that no other method than the old one would do here, "becauſe they never uſed any other." Some even entertain the prepoſterous idea, that horſes cannot labour in the tropical climes, though bred there, and that the Weſt India Iſles produce no food for cattle. Theſe ſhould conſult the conſcientious planter, Mr. Kemeys, who, by way of an apology for ſlavery, labours to prove the Negroes only half-human.

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vity, whether he poſſeſſed the neceſſary local and commercial knowledge? Gracious God! that it ſhould be neceſſary for a man to have local and commercial knowledge to enable him to determine upon the propriety of ſtealing and ſelling his fellow-creatures! or that any great conjuration ſhould be deemed requiſite to determine, that the labour of men is dearer than the labour of horſes; or, that they who hold the monopoly of any article of trade, ſhould have obtained it for any other purpoſe than that of preventing their fellow-ſubjects from purchaſing the commodity cheaper elſewhere.

In a word, every motive of duty or intereſt, that can be ſuppoſed to have weight or influence in the human mind, obviouſly concurs in urging this great and magnanimous nation to rid itſelf at once of that dangerous and extravagant nuiſance, called the Slave Trade. Let every man, who is ambitious of deſerving the glorious name of a true Briton, of a free-hearted Engliſhman, lift up his voice againſt it. For my own poor endeavours in the cauſe of philanthropy, they ſhall never ceaſe, but with my life. No power on earth, whilſt I enjoy my own liberty, ſhall reſtrain the exertions of my tongue and pen, in behalf of the unfortunate and oppreſſed.

I will have no compromiſe with cold-blooded cruelty, fraud-full avarice, treachery, and injuſtice. Were the ſword of the tyrant at my throat—my dying words ſhould be, Inſtant Abolition, Annihilation to the bloody Slave Trade!

I have ſaid, that our Poor Laws are in oppoſition to the civil rights of men. Will any one controvert this, who reflects for a moment upon the arbitrary and unfair ſpirit which dictated the law of ſettlements? By this unequal and oppreſſive regulation, a poor man is deprived of the chief advantages of emulative induſtry, and is robbed in fact of his fair chance

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in the lottery of life, to which every individual of a community has an equal right.

Should ſuch a * man take him a wife, and ſet down in a pariſh to which he does not belong; although he may have the faireſt proſpect of improving his circumſtances and condition in life, he is liable to be immediately expelled, leſt his family ſhould *eventually* become chargeable? One can ſcarce determine, whether ſuch barbarous abſurdities are more inimical to the individual or the public intereſt.

But there is a matter of ſtill greater conſequence, becauſe of more general influence, and which affects the whole body of the peaſantry in particular. I mean, the affixing arbitrary limits to the hire of the labourer. That law and cuſtom may be pleaded for it, there is no queſtion. But are ſuch laws and cuſtoms conſentaneous with that juſt equilibrium of rights, which ought to be the foundation of the ſocial compact? Mr. Burke ſays, and with as much truth as emphaſis and felicity of expreſſion, "Too much or too little is High Treaſon againſt Property." But is the benefit of this juſt and excellent maxim, like almoſt all other benefits, to be monopolized by the rich, and to be of no force or

* Some years ſince, in a certain pariſh in Middleſex, an induſtrious young man, and a very capital mower, married, and hired a cottage upon a Common by a wood-ſide. It was a retreat that a philoſopher might have been proud of; remarkably cheap, and fit for the poor man's purpoſe. This induſtrious couple had a ſmall ſtock, a breeding ſow, ſheep, &c. and both laboured, even to the hazard of their health, to earn money ſufficient to improve their beloved little home. They were ſuffered to remain until they had rendered their place the envy and wonder of all their neighbours, when behold the poor man was ſummoned before the Juſtice to prove his pariſh (which was the adjoining one) and was cruelly obliged to quit the place in which he delighted, and which had coſt him ſo much pains. His ſtock was ſold, and he was forced to go into a room in his own pariſh, not being able to find a cottage. He became ſullen and diſcontented, looking upon his country as a ſtep-mother, ſpent the remainder of his money, and took to poaching. In the year 1780, at the time of the rioting, he was heard to ſay, he would go to London, and join the mob; from that time he has never been heard of, and his wife now receives aſſiſtance from the pariſh.

validity when applied to the poor? There are caſes in which *fiat juſtitia ruat cælum* will not admit of moderation. Surely we ought not ſcruple to claſs the preſent among ſuch, in which are implicated the moſt valuable privileges of exiſtence. We hang a poor man, without entertaining the moſt diſtant ideas of ſhame or remorſe, for ſtealing half a guinea, even though the fact may have been the pure reſult of unavoidable diſtreſs; while we make no ſcruple of defrauding the whole body of labourers, in their liberty and property, to whatever extent we pleaſe, by ſelfiſh and arbitrary laws.

It will be ſaid, this arbitrary controul is neceſſary for reſtraining the inferior claſſes of mankind within their proper bounds, and from breaking in upon and overwhelming the higher orders of ſociety. I doubt it;—as I do the real utility of all fictions *and factitious* principles whatever, whether political or religious. How can I doubt of the real miſchiefs theſe have occaſioned in the world, when the page of hiſtory is open to my examination, and I there find they have been abandoned by degrees (as far as intereſt and prejudice would permit) from experience of their worthleſsneſs? The natural inequality of property is of itſelf ſufficient to preſerve the diſtinction of ranks, without any arbitrary reſtraint upon the acquiſitions of the poor. The intereſted will ſay, that the ignorant labourer is not to be truſted with fixing the price of his own induſtry—that he will rate it too high, for the ſake of ſpending a great part of his time in idleneſs and debauchery—that the national induſtry would be impeded, and the commerce of life become irregular and uncertain. But by how many degrees of light are thoſe immediately above the labourer ſuperior to him, that they are truſted by their country with a diſcretionary power of affixing whatever value they pleaſe upon their induſtry, and with the unreſtrained diſpoſal of their own time and property? If property

works

works ſuch ſudden and magical improvements in the human mind, it is pity we do not ſuffer the labourer to earn a little more of it. If we ſay, that earning too much money would corrupt the morals of the lower claſſes, and incline them to luxury and indolence, what is it but to ſpeak in the very ſpirit of an Agrarian Law? It is equally rational to ſuppoſe it would incite them to induſtry and parſimony. It would encourage matrimony and population, and ſoon prove how little neceſſity there was for former reſtraints. Labour and wages, like water, would find their proper level. One would ſuppoſe, that all the governments in the world have been at a loſs for employment, that they have ever mis-ſpent their time in contriving ſuch numberleſs, unneceſſary, and miſchievous regulations. Can it be a queſtion, at this time of day, that all men are equal in reſpect of their rights? If ſo, let us not deny the fulleſt juſtice to the poor man; and any inconvenience that may reſult, let us claſs with the unavoidable evils. Heretofore truth has been looked upon as two-fold, ſimple and uſeful. The juſtice and philoſophy of theſe enlightened times, are about to reſtore its unity and beauty.

I was led into the foregoing reflections, by the conſideration of a melancholy ſubject, which has for ſome years preſſed heavily on my mind. It is but too true, that the wages of the labourer (ſome mechanics excepted) are inſufficient to procure him and his family the common neceſſaries of life. A regularly flowing tide of proſperity, the influx of money, taxes perpetually accumulating, and an increaſing population, have nearly doubled the price of all the articles of indiſpenſible uſe; whilſt the poor man's wages have advanced but in a very trifling degree from what they were in the laſt century. Thus the weekly pay of a labourer in the country, at the Revolution, was ſix ſhillings; and my workmen (in Hampſhire) receive now only ſeven ſhillings per week, al-

though bacon, their chief article of diet, which was formerly ſold for four-pence per pound, is not now to be purchaſed at eight-pence; and nearly the ſame riſe has taken place in every article of food and cloathing. Nor is this a temporary advance of prices, as ſome authors have affected to conſider it; and granting it was, how are the poor to ſubſiſt under it, even in that caſe, without being occaſionally expoſed to diſtreſſes, at which humanity muſt revolt? What is a poor man to do with a family of half a dozen children, who has only ſeven ſhillings a week, and the trifle which his elder children and his wife can earn? Indeed, the pale looks and emaciated appearance of ſuch, but too plainly vindicate their wretched wants, whilſt their ſubmiſſive ſilence pleads powerful in their favour. Look at the numerous half-famiſhed wretches of the metropolis, who, from their ill-fortune of being unable to obtain a ſettled place in the line of life, may be called the irregulars of the labouring claſs—think of the ſufferings of theſe friendleſs creatures;—how many of them, influenced by a forbearance truly wonderful, periſh annually from mere want in a land overflowing with luxurious abundance; and what numbers, from the ſame cauſe only are driven to illegal courſes, for which our too ſanguinary laws put a period to their exiſtence! It is vain for us to expect, even the poſſibility of an amendment under the preſent ſyſtem; for the evil, on the contrary, muſt naturally increaſe, and keep pace with the progreſſive opulence of the country. Do we intend to wait until this diſeaſe in the body politic ſhall remedy itſelf by ſome violent convulſion; or, is there yet philoſophy and virtue enough among us to deviſe and apply proper and timely methods of prevention? The hard-hearted will tell me I am complaining of an *unavoidable evil;*—the Slaves of habit and indolence will dread to think of any but palliative remedies;—they who are conſcious of their uſurpation upon

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the rights of their fellow-citizens, will urge the danger and inutility of recurring to abſtract principles.

Behold the cruel Sophiſms, which have ſo long held the far greater part of mankind in conſtant miſery, and counteracted the very end of ſociety!

The unavoidable evils of life are indeed too numerous; but prejudice, ſelf-intereſt, and indolence, have ever deſired to ſwell their catalogue without neceſſity; and it is only by a recourſe to firſt principles, in other words, by a return to the paths of truth and juſtice, that we can determine of this, or hope to find adequate remedies. No evils ought to be held unavoidable, for which there lies a remedy within the power of the civil government. The civil contract *to be valid*, muſt embrace equally the intereſt of all the contracting parties; imitating, as near as poſſible, the grand ſyſtem of nature, in which all the powers and properties, phyſical and moral, are arranged and harmonized, and bound up together in one univerſal tie of intereſt. Contrary to this equitable plan, all governments have been hitherto calculated for the benefit of the rich only, and what is much more ſtrange to relate, the poor, although they conſtitute the real ſtrength of every country, have tamely ſubmitted to ſuch flagrant injuſtice. But continual oppreſſion has at length become inſupportable, and hence have ariſen the moſt of thoſe inteſtine wars which have deſolated the earth, and involved both the oppreſſors and the oppreſſed in one general ruin.

In a proſperous and flouriſhing community, there ought to be no diſtreſs ariſing from want, but among the criminal and the indolent. As man muſt eat, and as the law of neceſſity is paramount to all human laws and inſtitutions, ſo the right of the indigent poor, to the ſupport of life, is tantamount to any other right of ſociety. It is alſo among the moſt important duties of every government, to preſerve the poor from

from oppreſſion, and to find them conſtant employment, by which they can earn the ſolid comforts of life. The greater ſtake they have in the country, the more ſteady will be their allegiance, and the leſs liable will they be to fall into the ſnares of factious and evil-deſigning men. You may thus eradicate the very ſeeds of revolutions.

Few people will, perhaps, agree with me in opinion, or be willing to go ſo far in favour of the poor, as I have ſtated to be their right. As to the right, I think I could very eaſily prove it; but, by a chain of reaſoning, which, if convincing, might not be very pleaſant to the feelings of many readers. I do not mean to dogmatize. I ſee, in the moſt plentiful and thriving country in the whole world, numerous inſtances of poverty and diſtreſs, both in town and country. I ſee multitudes condemned to labour, without being enabled to earn a ſufficiency to ſupport nature under that labour; whilſt every rank above them are ſailing onwards with the fulleſt tide of proſperity and happineſs. Surely this is an impeachment of our juſtice, and a diſgrace to an opulent and free country like ours, and ought to be wiped away. I care not by what particular method it be effected, provided it be for the benefit and with the approbation of all parties.

But would it not be at leaſt the ſafeſt way, in theſe precarious times, to do away all partial reſtrictions, and give to the labouring claſſes their full rights; to allow them their juſt proportion of the proſperity of their country? It would be to take away every pretence of murmur or diſcontent, on account of the high price of proviſions, or the weight of taxes, the uſual and juſt ground of complaint. Convinced that their honeſt and induſtrious labour would always procure them an ample portion of the neceſſaries of life; that the juſt government, and the extenſive opulence of their country, would never ſuffer them to want employment; and feeling themſelves equal, *in reſpect of their rights*, with

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their fellow-citizens, our Engliſh Sans Culottes would, with redoubled attachment, devote themſelves to the defence of the Conſtitution. Suppoſe the price of labour riſes in conſequence, and the addition muſt come from the pockets of the middling claſſes. They are ever upon the aſcendant, and can well afford it. Can a juſt government deſire to give an undue advantage to one claſs of the ſubjects over another. Suppoſe it affected the upper ranks? Even if it went ſo far, that a gentleman muſt diminiſh his daily quantum of wine by a gill, that a poor labourer might have a pint of good beer, to make up for the daily expence of bodily fluid, I know no harm there would be in it. No ſuch effects, however, need be dreaded. The burden (if it muſt be ſo called) would of courſe fall equally on all ranks. To amend the condition of the poor, would be to increaſe population, and quicken induſtry; and would ultimately tend in the higheſt degree to the general benefit.

Putting juſtice entirely out of the queſtion, there exiſts, at this portentous period, a reaſon of the moſt ſerious complexion for keeping the lower orders of mankind in the moſt contented ſtate poſſible. In my opinion, he who has not attended to the riſing conſequence of that order, of late years, has made a very poor uſe of the political proſpect before him. In fact, ſince the days of the ancient republics, (when the tide ran in the other extreme) until of late the intereſts of the vulgar herd ſeem to have been beneath the attention, or unworthy even of the recollection of thoſe who have conducted revolutions. Hence the ſuperiority of the preſent principles of liberty. The philoſophers of France and America (in their theories I mean, and excepting ſome brutiſh notions of the right of the vulgar to govern themſelves) have ſketched out and publiſhed to the world a very juſt and accurate definition of the Rights of Man. It cannot change the nature of theſe rights, or diſcredit them, or convince

convince a thinking man of their impracticability, that the incapable and diſhoneſt oligarchs of France have made ſuch an erroneous and dangerous application of them. The "Volcanic particles of Equality" have burſt forth, in one country, with a tremendous and irreſiſtble fury. Let us not deceive ourſelves. There is a latent ſubterraneous fire glowing in the bowels of every country in Europe, and which will roar out by-and-bye with a violence proportioned to the pains taken to ſmother it. The French war, whenever or however terminated, will be only a prelude to a general combuſtion throughout Europe; nor will thoſe horrors be confined to Europe. I foreſee a ſtorm gathering in the Eaſt. The ſoul of the mighty Semiramis of the North, unſubdued by length of days, and unappalled by the near approach of the fatal hour, when ſhe muſt appear before that dread tribunal, where guilty tyrants tremble, is yet determined to lay the foundation of a Greek empire: and may ſhe be ſucceſsful. Even a change of tyrants will be a ſignal benefit to thoſe miſerable countries, ſo long held in ignominious bondage, by the moſt indolent, uſeleſs, and tyrannical race under the face of Heaven. Under Ruſſian deſpotiſm they will yet acquire civilization, which is the forerunner of freedom. It will be policy in the European ſtates to ſuffer the torrent of Muſcovite power to eſcape Eaſtward. Extent of dominion does not always imply proportional extent of power.

May this glorious ſeat of Liberty eſcape the dangers of the general contagion! Of all the governments of the earth, our mild and *nearly* equitable one has leaſt to reform. May he whoſe ſtake is greateſt among us, form a true eſtimate of the temper of the times, in deſpite of the counſels of thoſe whoſe intereſt it is to deceive; but who, in the day of trouble, would be leſs capable of rendering him ſervice than the meaneſt of their fellow-ſubjects. There is a golden rule by which governments might render themſelves eternal. They

ſhould

ſhould come forward, and ſpontaneouſly redreſs all the material grievances of the ſubject; but of how much more conſequence is this in dangerous times! A wiſe and experienced pilot, when he ſees a ſtorm gathering in the atmoſphere at a diſtance, calls his faithful crew to their poſts, ſtrikes all unneceſſary ſail, and puts his veſſel in the ſafeſt trim to meet it with prudence and fortitude.

On the theatre of the French Revolution, the Sans Culottes, or inferior order, have occupied a very important place. It ſtands the government of this country in hand, not only to cultivate that claſs with all poſſible aſſiduities and ſervices, but to take care and ſeaſon their minds with wholeſome political doctrines. An idea has lately become faſhionable (firſt promulged, I believe, by a writer whoſe opinions are generally weighed with much accuracy) of the all-ſufficiency of military forces, compoſed of people of property. Notwithſtanding the deference I have ever had for this gentleman's opinions, in moſt reſpects, in this I cannot agree with him. Neither experience nor reaſon I think go with him here. Opulence is indolent and effeminate. It is only in times of ſettled government that it can preſerve its reign. In caſe of a ſtruggle in this country, that party which ſhall ſucceſsfully court the labouring claſs, will give away the empire. Let them, who ſuppoſe there is no other way of ſecuring the ſervices of the poor but by oppreſſion, reflect upon the fate of the late tyrannical nobleſſe of France, upon their preſent abject and degraded condition. Alas! what humiliating conceſſions would not theſe unfortunate men now make to obtain a return to their former rank and ſituation!

Nobody can be ignorant of the attempts that have been made, and are ſtill meditating, to poiſon the minds of the common people; to impreſs them with dangerous notions of the inutility of the kingly office, and of the burden of a peerage; but few, I believe, are aware to what extent theſe

attempts have ſucceeded in the metropolis. Every thinking man too muſt have marked, with a particular attention, thoſe ominous ebullitions of enthuſiaſm and political fanaticiſm which have burſt forth from amongſt individuals of different parts of the country—theſe maladies of the human mind are epidemic; the mereſt accident may render their influence univerſal. Can there be a more ſafe and wholeſome preventive remedy for theſe evils than that of rendering our political ſyſtem liable to no ſolid objection?

I hear of miſerable palliatives.—I am told, that the wretched priſoners in our Engliſh Baſtiles are to be relieved ſo far as concerns their perſonal liberty, but that their debts (which the hardened creditor has already received in the gratification of his revenge) are to be ſtill left hanging over their heads. To what purpoſe is this, but to encourage avarice, and diſſeminate bad morals among the people? Becauſe, one in a thouſand may probably be ſucceſsful enough, in their new and diſadvantageous beginnings, to raiſe a property adequate to the diſcharge of old obligations, are they all to have a ſtumbling block put in the way of their induſtry, or to be driven from their native land, into countries more favourable to their rights?

Does ſuch conduct in a government evince her to be the natural mother of her children, who looks upon them all with the ſame impartial and parental eyes? That dreadful enthuſiaſm, which placed a train under the walls of the King's Bench, ought to be conſtantly preſent in the minds of *ſome men*. They may be convinced, when it is too late, how dangerous it is to urge to deſperation even the meaneſt of the people.

I cannot read, without extreme concern, the late ſpeech of a certain young man (whoſe family I am led both by inclination and duty to revere) in favour of human ſlavery. Can he eſtimate the inſidious plaudits of a few tyrannical, intereſted,

intereſted, and corrupt characters, as a fair equivalent for the probable loſs of the affections of the people of England? Can he ſuppoſe it becoming a ſon of his illuſtrious houſe, to ſtand perpetually forward as the active champion of deſpotiſm? I belong to that loyal and faithful claſs of ſubjects whoſe predilections in favour of Royalty nothing is able to wipe away. Our motto is, "Adhere to the Crown, although it hang to a Buſh." Yet even, in my ideas, in compariſon of juſtice and mercy, crowns and ſceptres are but baubles.

The projected Reform of our Parliamentary Repreſentation, claims the ſerious attention of every lover of the Britiſh conſtitution. The firſt and moſt material queſtion upon the ſubject is—From what quarter does this plan of pretended Reformation proceed? Although there are numbers of well-meaning and unſuſpecting people joined in it, and many alſo who have no ſerious intention, but take it up merely as a common political cloak, yet are not the prime inſtigators of the buſineſs notoriouſly Republican? That there are defects in the conſtitution of our Houſe of Commons, is moſt true; and that they will, in proceſs of time, be corrected, and that by people adequate and qualified for ſuch a taſk, I think we need not doubt. But as to that material addition of numbers to the Lower Houſe, and the limiting the duration of parliament to twelve months, no one I think of common political information but will give credit to the projectors for the propriety and aptitude of ſuch meaſures towards the accompliſhment of their grand aim, a Republican form of government. The people of England muſt chuſe, either the influence of the Crown, or the tyranny and corruption of a ſcore of petty tyrants, and the diſtractions a Commonwealth. As to the number of the Houſe of Commons, if five hundred are too few to govern us, and re-

dreſs our grievances, it will be vain for us to expect it from five thouſand.

The repeal of our religious teſts and ſubſcriptions was not, I truſt, refuſed from motives of bigotry and ſuperſtition; but the more laudable ones of guarding againſt the danger of an inundation of fanaticiſm into the boſom of the Church, of which this kingdom had ſo terrible an example in the laſt century. The ſturdy petitioners, methinks, have very little cauſe of complaint. Like the Phariſees deſcribed in their holy books, they ſtrain at a Gnat, and gulp down a Camel, without even making a wry face. In a caſe like this, for peace and quietneſs ſake and brotherly love, the few ought to join the many; when there are ſo many comical abſurdities on all hands, ſurely no party need ſtickle and affect to be over-nice. But teachers of diſſent and diſcord muſt live as well as teachers of muſic.

Let the nations of Europe rejoice! The time is at hand when creeds, ſubſcriptions, and teſts—thoſe fences contrived by intereſted tyranny, to prevent the unwelcome intruſion of truth, ſhall become uſeleſs, and fall of themſelves—when all religious perſecution ſhall ceaſe for want of an object. Thoſe blaſphemous and degrading poſitions, that rational creatures cannot be governed without the aid of ſuperſtition, and that morality, to be ſtable and of practical uſe, muſt reſt upon a foundation of prejudices and falſehoods, are about to be conſigned to that juſt contempt they merit, with the other numerous and cruel falſehoods and follies of antiquity. Human reaſon has at length diſcovered, that it is no more in its power, than it is its province, to alter and amend the moral government of the Deity. Such ſacrilegious temerity will ſoon ceaſe. The Babylon of ſuperſtition is fallen!

One cannot help remarking, the extreme ſolicitude of our clergy ſince the French Revolution, on the ſcore of what

may

may be called the machinery, or the factitions parts of religion. Vaſt numbers of books are publiſhed every month, at a heavy expence to their authors, in ſupport of the various ſacred Hypotheſes, concerning which the public in general ſeem to ſhew themſelves very little intereſted. This reſpectable and uſeful body of men, judge erroneouſly, I think, in ſuppoſing the exiſtence of their ſacred office depends on the preſervation of certain nonſenſical chimæras. Our national character ſecures us againſt the apprehenſion of ſuch impious follies as have been acted by the ſacrilegious madmen of France. The Church of England will flouriſh, as the preceptreſs and foſter-mother of virtue and juſt morals, and the neceſſary ally of the Crown, long after the objects of our preſent ſuperſtitious veneration are forgotten, or remembered only in our comedies and farces.

But it behoves the clergy of all nations, at this critical period, to be wary that they ſuffer not any of the old perſecuting maxims to eſcape them, in writing or diſcourſe. The dreadful example of France ought to be a warning to the clergy of Britain. I need not heſitate to pronounce the clergy of our excellent eſtabliſhment, the moſt liberal and moderate of any in the Chriſtian world; and yet we have ſome late inſtances of intemperance of language, and intolerance of principle, even among the writings of theſe; which, for the credit both of the writers and their cauſe, had been better reſtrained. One reverend gentleman tells us, in the moſt explicit terms, that the pureſt morality, unattended with religious belief, is of no worth or efficacy! A politic though deteſtable principle, which forms the very foundation and corner-ſtone of the Inquiſition. A Right Rev. Prelate, although renowned for elegant learning and philanthropy, has for once ſuffered his "paſſions to inſtruct his reaſon" to ſuch a pitch, as to publiſh the following curious ſentence: "Before Guilt of this infernal die (that of Scepticiſm)

Scepticiſm) that of cheating, of thieving, of perjury, of robbery, and murder, melts away and vaniſhes into nothing." Gentle reader, the uſual puniſhment of thoſe *inferior* crimes noted by the good Biſhop, is only ſimple death. With his head full of the ſtatute *de heretico comburendo*, I ſuppoſe, he would doom Atheiſm to death by lingering torments! As another example, which indeed ought not to have been placed laſt, a writer in one of our periodical publications of Criticiſm, has humanely recommended the practice of hunting down Atheiſts like wild beaſts, and of rooting them out of ſociety! Is this the meek and tolerant ſpirit of the goſpel, ſo much vaunted by its profeſſors? We need not then wonder that there is no country under Heaven, where religion has once got foot, which it has not divided againſt itſelf. Superſtition, inſtead of encouraging, has even been one of the greateſt enemies of juſt morality; and its fall will recover and bring into uſe ſome of the moſt ſublime and excellent qualities of the human ſoul. Under this "cloak of prejudice," which it was pretended was to keep virtue warm, have been concealed the moſt hideous vices! *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.*

And have theſe merciful gentlemen well conſidered the principles of the ill-fated Atheiſts, whom they ſo unrelentingly conſign to tortures and death? Reſpecting the notion of a Deity, do they reflect upon the very trifling difference, or rather only the nominal one, which ſubſiſts between the Atheiſts and themſelves? They have framed to themſelves the idea of a ſubſtantial form of divinity, of which, however, their limited reaſon prevents their obtaining any juſt or adequate conception. The more diffident Atheiſt aſcends, by a chain of reaſoning, from finite to infinite goodneſs; worſhips a quality; and ſays, he will have no God but Juſtice. Thus one grand difference between you, appears to be, you worſhip an imaginary form—he a real quality.

You,

You, not contented with the analogy of perſonifying your God, even clothe him with paſſions ſimilar to your own—thus, he deſigns and repents, makes and unmakes, is jealous and has favourites, delights in human ſacrifices, and even in everlaſting puniſhments. The God of the Atheiſt is eternal, immutable, ever the ſame. What wickedneſs or impropriety can there be in doubting or reaſoning upon the exiſtence of a Deity, any more than upon that of the Unicorn? Granting his exiſtence, he himſelf has been pleaſed to leave room for theſe doubts, and has furniſhed and prompted theſe reaſoning faculties. As for the machinery (for religion it ſeems cannot ſubſiſt without it, any more than the Epic) of ſubordinate gods, and devils, and angels, and ſpirits, and witches, with all the multitudinous and miſchievous rabble of imaginary beings, which are ſaid to inhabit and infeſt the cold regions of ſtorms and tempeſts; the modeſt Atheiſt humbly begs permiſſion to ſuſpend his belief. He finds no warrant from nature or reaſon for ſuch ſuppoſitions. He is aware of the cruelties and miſchiefs that have happened in the world, from the groſs preſumption that effects can be produced without adequate cauſes. Religious hiſtories and traditions he ſlights, becauſe inſtead of offering proofs, they require implicit faith; in which he ſees no merit. He holds nothing to be good or uſeful which is falſe. That it is our firſt duty to follow truth, how far ſoever ſhe may lead; and that on her alone muſt be our ultimate dependence in all things. He complains that your fabricated ſyſtems have been built upon human credulity and weakneſs, and cemented with human blood; that they have ſerved only to hoodwink and limit the underſtanding, and to harden the heart. That the mind of man has been loaded with uſeleſs fictions, to the prejudice and excluſion of ſome of the moſt important duties; the former, he has been taught to prefer, and to adhere to them with a jealous and ſavage obſtinacy.

Thus

Thus the Right Rev. Prelate, above cited, makes unbelief the foulest of all vices. Upon a similar principle, the wicked man flatters himself he atones amply for the most enormous crimes, by being a true believer.

The Atheist complains of the matchless absurdity of teaching, and supposing the vulgar able to comprehend, the most incomprehensible mysteries; and yet unable to understand the naked truths of morality, which require only the most simple exertions of the reasoning faculty. He pretends to see no more utility than truth in your system, which has never comprehended a thirtieth part of mankind, and has been for ages on the decline; which has received all its improvements from those very infidels it presumes to damn and execrate; and which has made so small a progress in perfecting the morals of mankind, that even its staunchest votaries at this day, Judas like, scruple not to buy and sell their brothers blood! As an example of the dangerous spirit of superstition (and a moderate one it is among thousands more ridiculous and more atrocious) the good people of this country once went to cutting one anothers throats, on a question of the propriety of bowing at the name of a certain person, when not a man of them could *fairly* prove that such person ever existed: and if, after all, they had been able to prove it, all the benefit they could have derived therefrom, would have been the labour of the research.

He is sorry to give offence, but he cannot restrain his risible faculties, when he is gravely told that Almighty wisdom thought itself concerned in ordering a miserable people to cut off a bit of that precious member, which modesty and the small cloths usually conceal: or, that the most High condescend to direct his prophet to feed upon *petit pains*, made of sir-reverence and barley-meal, to purge away by proxy the sins of the people. Such precious truths he thinks may set people together by the ears (which indeed they have already

already ſufficiently done) but can never in any degree contribute to the improvement of their morals.

> The Indians fought for the truth,
> Of the Elephant and the Monkey's tooth.

If you aſk the moral Atheiſt concerning death, he tells you he rejoices in it, as the moſt glorious and moſt conſoling privilege of humanity. The grand refuge which makes the evils of life tolerable. Of Annihilation, he ſays, he ſees not how the *poſſe* of it can be made intelligible by human reaſon. On the ſubject of future rewards and puniſhments;—he profeſſes that good works are their own reward; that conſcience of crime naturally implies puniſhment; and that theſe notions (true or falſe, which matters not to us, ſeeing we cannot change them) are indigenous in the human breaſt, and can never be eradicated. But for his own part, he ſaith, he is virtuous for virtue's ſake; not from the inferior motives of hope or reward, or fear of puniſhment. Such are beneath the dignity of the philoſophic character.

If you queſtion him on the nature of his hope and dependance in a future life. He anſwers, *that* evidently concerns not him, ſeeing nature hath diſcovered nothing of it. But his ſole dependance is on eternal and unchangeable juſtice, which, in his ideas, holds analogy with the unerring laws of gravity and the balance. He ſays, no Ghoſt need ariſe from the Shades, or ſpecial meſſenger be ſent from on high, to tell mankind theſe truths; becauſe they need but ſearch, and they will find them implanted in their own reaſon. If you call him ignorant and unfurniſhed with conſoling principles, he replies *humanum eſt neſcire*, and it is nature's fault not theirs. He ſees more miſchief than utility in deceiving either himſelf or others. And he holds the

fall of religious ſuperſtition will be the perfection of human virtue.

The mind as well as the body of a man reſiſts ſhackles with indignation. And it is time, in this free country, that the ſect of which we are ſpeaking, call them by whatever denomination which likes you beſt, Atheiſts, Deiſts, Infidels, or Heathens, ſhould have free liberty of declaring their ſentiments; for they make full a fifth part of the people of England. That they are bad ſubjects, or bad men, merely on account of their particular tenets, is a vulgar error. Were Swift, Pope, Gay, Middleton, Smollet, Hume, and Sterne, worſe citizens on account of being Atheiſts and Deiſts? Unleſs indeed on account of the hypocriſy of ſome of them, and the error of others, in hiding their light from their fellow-creatures.

Provided a man be loyal and faithful to his King and country, juſt to his neighbour, and merciful to his beaſt, it matters not whether he chuſes to worſhip as many Gods as the old Hebrews, or even the Egyptians, or none at all, like the modern French and Chineſe. Surely, if we Chriſtians aſſume the right of chuſing whether we will have one God or three, with that of having as many devils as we judge ſufficient, we ought to leave to all other, although leſs enlightened people, the privilege of regulating theſe matters, according to the ſize and capacity of their own conſcience.

At laſt of all, if men notwithſtanding their utmoſt endeavours cannot believe, it is rather hard they ſhould be burned in two worlds for it. But almoſt all the cruelties, of which this world is full, are as unneceſſary and uſeleſs, as they are unjuſt.

May all religious differences ceaſe, and the Church of England become univerſal throughout the empire! May the only contention among us be, which ſhall beſt act up to that

ſacred

ſacred and all-ſufficient maxim, "Do as you would be done unto."

May our Commonalty be free, happy, and ſatisfied in their labour! May agriculture and the arts pervade, and rejoice with their cheering preſence, every corner of the country; and our foreign trade, purged from monopoly and injuſtice, be extended as a reciprocal bleſſing to every quarter of the habitable globe!

May theſe kingdoms never be without an order of nobility, of high and illuſtrious deſcent, rivalling in opulence, ſplendor, and hoſpitality, the ancient Barons their progenitors; and rendering amends for the inequality of rank and property, by a diffuſion of the bleſſings of a beneficial luxury throughout the land!

May our ancient conſtitution of government, veſted in King, Lords, and Commons, a ſyſtem the moſt congenial with Britiſh minds, and the *ne plus ultra* of human wiſdom, be perpetual!

To ſecure theſe bleſſings, to repreſs the foreign foe, and to curb Republican madneſs and folly, may we always have a ſufficient ſtanding force, ſeverely diſciplined and well paid!

And may the auguſt Family of the Guelphs, the lineal deſcendants of the God Woden, the rightful heirs of the Plantagenets, the Tudors, and the Stuarts, rule in glory and proſperity over theſe kingdoms, and reign ſovereign lords of the ocean, a thouſand years! Amen.

To conclude with the Hero of our Drama—a lucky main hath put him in poſſeſſion of two thouſand pounds a year. With ſuch a ſtake in the Commonwealth, Charles *** will veer about once more, and become a good Whig again.

A certain noble Philoſopher has ſaid, that men of warm and

and impetuous imaginations are not calculated to ſucceed in public buſineſs until towards the decline of life. I heartily wiſh that the future conduct of the political and private life of Mr. *** may evince, that he hath gained ample profit from experience.

The greateſt knowledge is thyſelf to know.

FINIS.

20 MR 51

Juſt publiſhed, Price Six Pence,

A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

LOSS OF THE WINTERTON,

ON HER PASSASE TO INDIA,

ON THE 20th OF AUGUST 1792,

ON A

REEF OF ROCKS OFF THE ISLAND OF MADAGASCAR.

WITH THE NAMES OF

THE PASSENGERS AND OFFICERS

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